

A LIFE OF CHRIST FOR THE YOUNG



GEORGE L. WEED



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THE INFANT CHRIST WITH HIS MOTHER AND JOSEPH

'Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.'—Matt. i. 21.

A LIFE OF CHRIST FOR THE YOUNG

By
GEORGE LUDINGTON WEED

Author of

"Life of St. John for the Young"
"Life of St. Peter for the Young"
"Life of St. Paul for the Young"
'Great Truths Simply Told'

With eight full-page illustrations in color, and seventy-four
full-page illustrations in black and white

*"I came down from Heaven. I came forth from the Father,
and am come into the world: again I leave the world and go to
the Father."—Jesus Christ.*

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AUTHOR'S PREFATORY NOTE

A life-size, marble statue of the Christ was to me the most interesting object in the art collection of the Columbian Exposition. Never-tiring visits, and different standpoints on its level and from the gallery above, gave opportunity for discovering new and varied beauties.

A young admirer, though seeing it from a single standpoint, unconsciously revealed her appreciative spirit by the tone and manner as well as the words of her subdued exclamation, "Isn't it beautiful!"

Such is the view we would have all the young take of the Christ. To secure it, we must place ourselves, not "above" their standpoint, but on a "level" with them, measuring their field of vision, and pointing to what is within it; meanwhile endeavoring to enlarge its scope.

The publishers of this volume, contemplating a series of Christian Biographies, have fittingly arranged that the first shall be of Him who is the Inspirer of all worthy lives.

In consenting to undertake this work, I am not unmindful of the declaration that, "Whoever thinks himself capable of rewriting the story of the Gospels does not understand them." But that attempt is not herein made. The purpose, however short of fulfilment, is to direct attention to such phases of the life and character of our Lord as

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can be appreciated by young people, especially of ten or twelve years and upwards, and to such of His teachings as are adapted to their needs. In short, it is to present Him as the God-man, the Great Teacher, the Perfect Example and the only Saviour, in a simple, connected narrative of His life on the earth.

A journey through the Holy Land has helped to make that life real and vivid; while such Christian scholarship as that of Farrar, Geikie, Andrews, Edersheim and Stalker, has greatly aided in its interpretation.

The author, standing by the side of the young, where most of his life has been spent, hopes and prays that, by the Holy Spirit's aid, they may gain such a view of our Lord as will cause them to echo the exclamation before the Columbian statue, "*Isn't it beautiful!*"

G. L. W.

NOTE TO NEW EDITION

The call for a new edition of this volume gives opportunity to increase its value by giving a fuller Table of Contents, thereby adapting it for use as a text-book, for which it has been recommended.

The recent companion volume, "The Life of St. Paul for the Young," by the same author, has a corresponding syllabus.

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Chapter I

The Land Where Jesus Lived

There is a land, far away from our American homes, which has many names. Each of them reminds us of a part of its history—of the different things which have there happened.

One of these names was given twenty-five hundred years ago by God Himself. He told a prophet that He had "espied" it, looking down from heaven upon it, as a good land for His people, the Jews. He called it "the Glory of all Lands," because of its beauty and goodness, and the wonderful works He there performed.

But it had a greater glory when He sent His son Jesus from heaven to make it His earthly home, and to do there greater wonders than He Himself had done. In it Jesus lived the only holy life in our world. So we call it "The Holy Land."

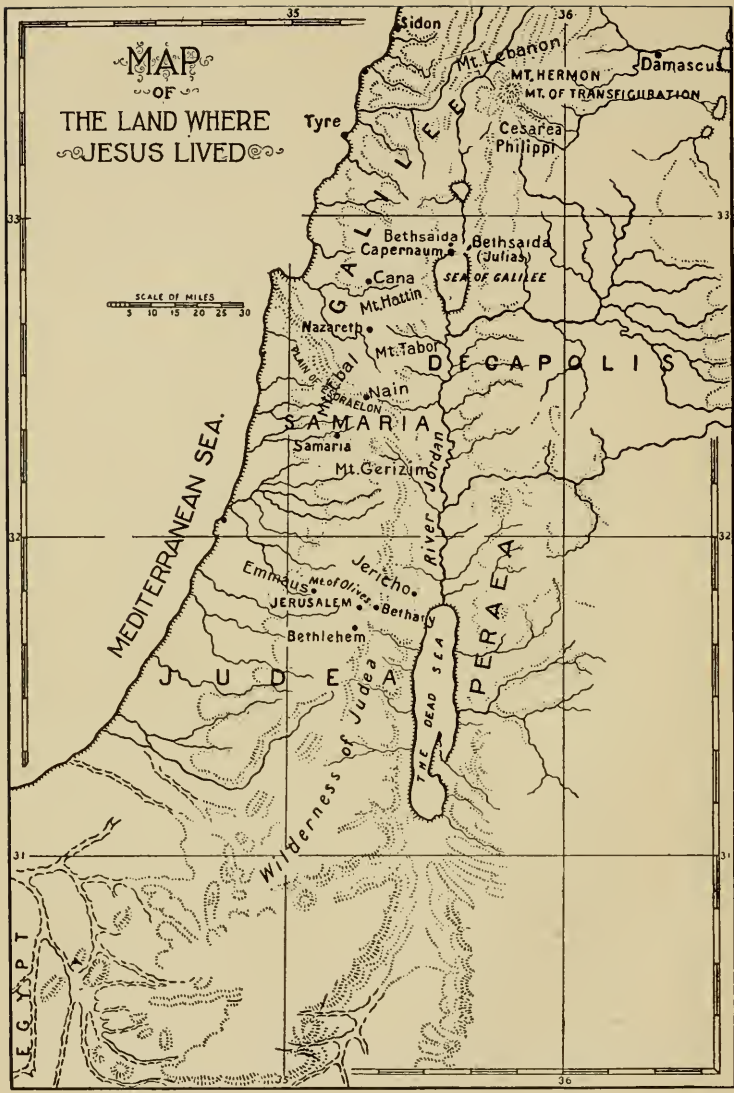
We might think of such a country as great in size; as the little boy thought Alexander the Great, having such a name and doing mighty

things, must be as large as Goliath. But things of the greatest value may be small in size. A diamond is of more interest to us than a piece of coal a thousand times as large. A little humming-bird, called "a winged jewel," flitting from bush to bush, pleases us more than a huge owl perched lazily upon a tree.

The Holy Land is a small country for its history. The greatest length is one hundred and eighty miles. An even width would be about sixty-five miles. From many a height the whole breadth of the land can be seen. It is not as large as Massachusetts or Connecticut. Yet within these narrow bounds are rounded hills; and rugged, lofty mountains with deep valleys; fruitful fields and barren deserts; rivers, lakes and seas; upon and around which have happened the most wonderful things in the history of the world.

On the northern boundaries are the Mountains of Lebanon; on the east, the waters of the Sea of Galilee, the river Jordan, and the Dead Sea, separating it from the vast plains beyond; on the south, barren deserts; and on the west, the Mediterranean Sea, called by the people of long ago the Great Sea, because they did not know of the greater oceans.





MAP
OF
THE LAND WHERE
JESUS LIVED

SCALE OF MILES
0 5 10 15 20 25 30

Sidon
Tyre
Mt. Lebanon
Damascus
Mt. Hermon
Mt. of Transfiguration
Caesarea
Philippi
Bethsaida
Bethsaida (Julias)
Capernaum
Cana
Sea of Galilee
Mt. Mattin
Nazareth
Mt. Tabor
Decapolis
Nain
Samaritan
Samaritan
Samaria
Mt. Gerizim
Jericho
River of Jordan
Peraea
The Dead Sea
Bethlehem
Jerusalem
Mt. of Olives
Emmaus
Judea
Wilderness of Judea
Egypt

Parts of the Holy Land are very beautiful, not more so than many other countries, but as a great contrast to the barren regions around it.

The climate is varied, but generally warm or temperate. In winter there is no ice. The brooks become torrents because of heavy rains. The night winds are cold. Some mountain tops are always covered with snow, while there are valleys into which it never falls. Even in January groves and meadows show the buddings of spring. The almond, peach and orange trees blossom. Such flowers as the anemone, crocus, narcissus, hyacinth, lily and violet begin to bloom. Sometimes even corn appears above the ground. In spring the wild tulips and poppies, and other flowers of brilliant colors, "clothe the land with a dress of scarlet." But after a few weeks they wither in the burning rays of the sun, and the hot wind called sirocco.

So varied is the climate that the productions of all countries can grow within its borders—fig-trees and grape-vines on the sunny slopes of the south, and cedars among the rocks of the north.

A boy from a distant land where he gathered apples, plums and quinces, and one from another country where he gathered pomegranates, bananas

and almonds, could meet in the Holy Land, and from neighboring trees pluck such fruits as they had at home. They could play and rest under the shadows of oaks, maples, palms, evergreens, sycamores, fig and olive trees, such as are found in different parts of the world.

If we should now journey through the Holy Land, we would find its cities, villages and people greatly changed from what they were in the time of Christ. He is no longer there, but the country, though changed in appearance, is still the same. We know where He journeyed and where He often stayed. I was permitted to go from place to place in which He had been, and read from my Bible of the things He said and did.

And now, with the aid of the map prepared for this book, I ask my young readers to follow me in thought through the land where Jesus lived.

Chapter II

The Shepherds' Plain

Bethlehem

In the Holy Land is a little plain, to which thousands of people go every year to see where happened some of the things of which the Bible tells.

More than thirty-six hundred years ago there stood upon it a small house for shepherds when tending their flocks. It was called "The Tower of the Flock."

One day a traveler came, an old man with a young son, whom he greatly loved, and pitched his tent near the tower. They were both sad, because the mother had just died and been buried near the plain, by the road-side, where multitudes now go to visit her grave, thinking of her and of the beautiful and good son. The father's name was Jacob; the son's, Joseph.

Four hundred years later we find a lovely woman named Ruth gathering barley on the plain. She is remembered for her goodness;

and also because among her children's children there was a shepherd boy who watched his sheep where she had gleaned among the sheaves. He tended them when lying down, led them to the quiet brook for drink, and defended them from the lions and bears that came down from the dark valleys of the mountains. What he did for his sheep reminded him of what God did for him, and so he sang, "The Lord is my Shepherd." His name was David.

We are told that he was "ruddy" and of "a beautiful countenance." But there was something better than that: he was good like Joseph and Ruth. As Joseph went from that plain to become at last the ruler of Egypt, so David went from the same spot to become at last a Jewish king. Among his children's children there was to be a more wonderful child than Joseph or he.

A thousand years after David lived, the little plain had its greatest glory. We are told a third time of its flocks and shepherds. Six miles from it was God's Temple in Jerusalem, where lambs were used in worshipping Him. They must be perfect lambs, not sickly nor with broken bones; and so the shepherds were very careful of them. These men were not common shepherds, but

somewhat like the priests in the Temple. They were good men, who had read and believed the promises in the Old Testament that the Messiah, whom we call Jesus, would come. They did not know exactly when or how He would appear. They were not looking for him one night, when they were watching their flocks, nor thinking He was near the plain. They were doing just as the shepherds of the Tower, or as David had done in the same field long before. Dressed in coarse cloth, or sheepskins with wool inside, with their loose cloaks around them, and bright-colored kerchiefs on their heads, they sat around the fire they had made to keep them warm in the chilly night, and to scare away the wild animals which were first prowling in the distance, and then lurking nearer for the lambs of the fold.

The moon and stars shone brighter than in our American skies. But they beheld a light about them brighter than sun or moon or fire. It was such a light as we have never seen. It was called "the glory of the Lord."

But this was not all. An angel of the Lord stood before them. He was a messenger from heaven sent to tell them that the Messiah, Jesus, whom they expected, had come, and how He had

come, and where they might find Him. So suddenly did the angel appear, so holy did he seem, so different from themselves, that they were greatly afraid. But, with a kind look and a tender voice, he bade them "Fear not." Then with an earnest tone he cried, "Behold," by which he meant that he had something very important to tell them. They listened, wondering what it could be. He said, "I bring you good tidings of great joy." Then they wondered yet more. He told them that the good news was not for them only, but for "all people." Let us listen as if we heard the angel telling the glad tidings to us as well as to the shepherds on the plain, in these words, "Unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

As the shepherds listened to the words of the angel, their great fear was turned to great joy. They were very glad to know that the babe was only a mile from them, in the City of David, which is Bethlehem. It was called the City of David because he was born there. The angel saw how deeply interested they were, and thought they would immediately go into the town and look for the infant child. So he told them where

they could find it—in a manger—and this would prove that all he said was true.

This seemed like a strange place in which to look for such a child. But Mary, its mother, and Joseph, her husband, having come from their home in Nazareth, could find no room at the Bethlehem inn, because it was full of people; so they had to do as other travelers often did in that country—they stayed in a stable. This was often a cave adjoining the inn. In such a place the babe would be found.

Before the angel had left the shepherds they were astonished again, at a more glorious sight than he had been. It was such as none but these shepherds ever beheld. Far up in the sky they saw something like a cloud descending swiftly toward them. It was so bright that the moon and stars were dim. But soon they knew that it was not a cloud, but a multitude of angels. The sky was hidden by their outstretched wings, on which they came nearer and nearer to the earth. Their brightness lighted up the plain as if the sun had risen before the hour for break of day. Then the stillness of the night was broken by the sound of their voices—strange, sweet voices, such as those shepherds only have ever heard. Their music was

purser and sweeter far than any of Sabbath-school, church or cathedral. It was the music of heaven, such as holy beings render around the throne of God.

Their downward flight ended, and, like birds, they poised on their great, white, soft wings over the plain untouched by their holy feet, while their song floated over it and the sleeping town of Bethlehem. They sang of the babe in the manger, the Christ-Child, and this was their song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." And so they were the first to sing the Christmas carol that old and young have sung for nineteen hundred years.

The story is beautifully told in a hymn :

"It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old;
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold.
Peace on the earth, good-will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious king;
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing."

When they had finished their song, they soared away, a happy band, because of their love to God,

and to men whom they had taught to sing His praise. The shepherds, full of joy and wonder, watched them as they rose from the plain and disappeared beyond the moon and stars, which again shone with their own brightness in that midnight sky.

Chapter III

The Manger of Bethlehem

Bethlehem

“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, ‘Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which the Lord hath made known unto us.’”

We are told that they went “with haste.” No wonder; for joy quickened their steps. They ran as children do on a pleasing errand. How short seemed the mile between the spot on the plain where the angel had stood and the place of which he had told them, where they would “find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” They thought not of weariness as they climbed the steep hill of Bethlehem to its whitened walls of stone, so clear in the moonlight. The watchman at the gate must have wondered at the nightly visitors, until hurriedly told why they had come.

They reached the opening of the cave-stable,



in which hung the lamp that lighted them dimly to the spot where "they found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger." No bright angels made music over it. No light shone about its head as "the glory of the Lord" shone about the shepherds on the plain. But in that manger was the Babe of whom the angel had told the glad tidings. In that little body was the Spirit from heaven—the Child whom he called "Saviour, Christ and Lord." When you have learned more of it, you will understand why such names were given. Each of them has a meaning of what it was to become. As Joseph went from the plain to become at last the ruler of Egypt, and David a Jewish king, so the Babe of Bethlehem, whom the angel called *the* Lord, was to become a greater King than Joseph or David—a King of another kind. But at first we are to think of Him, not as a great king, but as a little child, with a body and a spirit like any other; living and growing and learning, like all other children; but without thinking or saying or doing anything wrong. In these things every child should try to be like him.

Chapter IV

The Infant Jesus in the Temple

Jerusalem

We have called the infant child in Bethlehem by the name of Jesus. Why did He have that name? Before He was born an angel had said to Mary, His mother, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus." An angel had also said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save the people from their sins." The word Jesus means Saviour. He saves people from their sins by teaching them how to be good, and by helping them to be good. If men repent of their sins He forgives them and saves them from much sorrow while they live, and from all trouble and sorrow after death. He was the Saviour on earth and is now the Saviour in heaven.

This is why the angel on the plain told the shepherds that a Saviour was born. He might have said that *Jesus* was born. That child was the Son of God. As His Father in heaven had told the angel to tell Mary and Joseph what He

should be called on earth, there was no need for them to choose a name. But when He was eight days old, they did as all Jewish parents did: they had a solemn service and fixed the name the child should always have, as is done now when a child is baptized. They called his name Jesus.

In the Holy Land lived a great nation, different from all other peoples in the world. God did for them what He did for no others: so they were called God's people. They were the Jews.

The largest and most beautiful city in their Holy Land was Jerusalem, six miles from Bethlehem. God did wonderful things in it. It was the city of the world where He was worshipped. So it was called the Holy City.

There was in it a beautiful house for His worship, a Holy House, called the Temple, and the Lord's House.

Jesus came from heaven to God's people, to the Holy Land, the Holy City, and the Holy House. He, who was called the Lord of the Temple, entered the Temple of the Lord. He was brought there by Joseph and Mary when He was nearly six weeks old. Like other Jewish mothers she took Him there to show her happiness and thankfulness that the little boy had been

given to her, and that she wished Him to be a child of God, loving, obeying and serving Him as long as he lived.

It was a Jewish law that when a mother brought her child to the Temple, she should also bring an offering, or present. If she were rich she brought a lamb ; but if poor, two doves, which cost but little. With the first boy-child she also gave a piece of money. Joseph and Mary were too poor to give a lamb, so they gave two doves with the money when they brought Jesus to the Temple.

Standing before it, they listened for the sound of three silver trumpets blown three times within, to tell the waiting people that it was time for the morning service to begin. Then the great outer doors slowly opened, and Joseph and Mary, with the infant Jesus, reverently entered. They ascended the white steps and went between marble pillars of different colors : then through a wide court paved with marble of all colors, to a building of pure white marble. At last they went through a gate called Beautiful, and then through another called Nicanor, which might have been named More Beautiful.

They waited until white-robed priests came to meet them. Other mothers besides Mary were

there with little children. No one thought she was different from them, or that her little boy was more wonderful than any other child in the temple that morning, or than all the other children in the world.

The sound of the organ, which could be heard throughout the vast temple, called the parents to bring the children to a priest, called a Rabbi. Joseph gave to him the money he had brought, and then prayed, saying: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe." The Rabbi took the coin and passed it around the child's head, upon which he put his hands, and prayed, saying: "God keep thee from all evil and save thy soul." That Rabbi did not know for whom he was praying. It was the only one of all children and all people who would never sin, and the only one through whom all others must be saved.

There was in Jerusalem an old man named Simeon, wiser than any priest or Rabbi, because he not only studied the Scriptures, but was also taught by the Spirit of God, who told him that he should not die until he had seen the promised Saviour. He believed God, and was waiting for the wonderful sight.

The day for which he had been waiting had now come. "And he came by the Spirit into the Temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus," he understood who it was. Mary saw the venerable, white-haired old man, perhaps tottering on his staff, coming toward her with a kind and joyful look upon her and her child. He tenderly "took Him up in his arms." She listened, as only Mary could, as he "blessed God, and said, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation,'" by which he meant that he had seen the promised Saviour.

Then he told Mary of things that would happen to her and her child. As she had remembered and thought about what the shepherds had told her in the stable, she "marveled at those things which were spoken" by Simeon in the Temple.

But the good old prophet was not the only one to rejoice over the infant Saviour, and to speak of Him. We are told that "there was one Anna, a prophetess: she was of great age, which departed not from the temple, worshipping night and day, and, coming up at that very hour, she gave thanks unto God, and spake of Him" whom Simeon held in his arms.



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THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

Gustave Doré

Chapter V

The Star of Bethlehem

Bethlehem

In a country far east of the Holy Land lived wise men called Magi, who knew many things, and believed many others, about which they did not certainly know. They studied much about the stars. When they saw anything unusual in the sky, they thought some strange thing would happen on the earth. They believed that the stars had something to do with the lives of men. They thought that if a certain star was in a certain place in the sky when a child was born, it showed whether good or bad things would happen to the child when it was older.

They had learned something about the Saviour, whom the Jews expected as their king. Their Scriptures, which we call the Old Testament of the Bible, told of His coming. They called Him the Messiah. But neither the Jews nor the Magi understood when He would appear.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, these

Wise Men, in their distant country, saw something strange in the sky. It was a bright star, different from all other stars. They wondered what it meant—what strange thing had happened and where, and whose star it was. Perhaps God Himself told them in some way that the Messiah had come, and that somewhere He could be found as a babe; but they did not understand that it was in Bethlehem.

We do not know how long the star shone, but probably not long. As the Holy Land was the country of the Jews, the Magi thought that He who was born their king could there be found. As Jerusalem was the capital of the Holy Land, they thought they would seek Him there. So some of them started to honor Him as a king and worship him as God. We do not know how many went. Some think there were twelve; others, only three; of whom one was an old man, another a very young man, and the third a middle-aged man. Some think they were kings. They needed no star for a guide. They must go on camels, carrying food and water for their long, hot, weary, desert journey. They must take spears and swords for defence from robbers, who might take the gold and costly things they carried.

So, as the shepherds went with haste from the plain to see Him whom the angel called "the Lord," the Wise Men went from their eastern home to Jerusalem to see and worship the same child, whom they called "the King."

Some have thought that the star went before them and led the way ; probably it disappeared before they started, but appeared again.

At last they reached the Holy Land, and from a mount called Olivet they looked down upon the Holy City and upon the Holy House, from which the Holy Child had been carried back to Bethlehem. Their long, tedious journey was ended. They thought that soon they would see the infant King. They supposed the people of the city knew where He was, and rejoiced in His coming. But they were disappointed. They saw no flag or other signal, such as is raised on a palace in which there is an infant child who is to become a king. No angel was there to tell them He was "in the city of David," as one had told the shepherds on the plain. No heavenly host was praising God over Jerusalem because He was born.

The Wise Men earnestly asked of one and another whom they met, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" They received only one

answer, "We do not know." But the Magi did not doubt that He was somewhere near. They still believed what they did in their distant home about the star and the Messiah. So they kept saying, "We have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him."

The words of the Magi were repeated to Herod, the king. He did not know much about the Jewish Scriptures. So he called together the priests and most learned men in Jerusalem, and asked what they said about where Christ the infant King should be born. They told him, in Bethlehem. Then he sent for the Wise Men, and invited them to his palace, and treated them kindly, and asked them about the wonderful star they had seen, and listened attentively to their story. He talked with them about Bethlehem as the place where they would find Jesus, and of how they would worship Him there, and what a proper thing it was for them to do. They were pleased to hear the king, who was called Herod the Great, talk so kindly about the infant King, whom they had come so far to find and to worship; so, when leaving his palace, they were very glad to hear him say: "Go and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found



Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also." They thought what a good man he must be, and what a good king, who seemed not to have an unkind thought toward Him who had been born King of the Jews.

"When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding joy." They were sure that Jesus had come, and that "His star," which they had seen in the east, was now shining as brightly over Bethlehem as it had shone over their distant homes.

You remember when the angel parted from the shepherds on the plain, they said one to another, "Let us now go even to Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us." And now the Wise Men, as they departed from Herod, could say the same words. Of the shepherds it is said, "They came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger." Of the Wise Men it is said, "When they were come into the house they saw the young child with Mary

His mother." They had found Him in a better place than in the stable.

As Mary had listened to the wonderful story of what the shepherds had seen and heard on the neighboring plain, she now listened to the story of the Wise Men; of what they had seen, at probably the same hour, far away from Bethlehem. She understood with joy that the same Father in Heaven had sent the bright angels to sing over the shepherds, and to put the bright star in the sky to shine over the Wise Men, because His son Jesus was born.

We are told of the shepherds, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen." Of the Wise Men it is said: "When they saw the young child they fell down and worshipped Him." But this was not all they did; they presented Him with gifts—the first and probably the richest He received on earth. There was gold; and also frankincense and myrrh, which were sweet-smelling spices, among the most precious things their country produced. They gave a last look at the beautiful child; then bade farewell to Joseph, and to Mary, the happy mother of the new-born King, to whom they had been guided by the Star of Bethlehem.

Did they say to each other, "Let us go even to the plain and see the shepherds and tell them what the Lord hath made known unto us as well as unto them"? We do not know; but they would not forget the promise they had made to Herod to tell him where Jesus was, that he also might come and worship Him. In the morning they must see him in the palace in Jerusalem. Then, crossing Mount Olivet, from which they had first seen the city, they must journey eastward, returning that way to their home. But in the night, "being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way."

Let us remember who were the first to welcome Jesus to the earth—the angels with their songs; the shepherds with their adoration; the aged Simeon and Anna with their praises, and the Wise Men with their worship and their gifts.

Chapter VI

The Flight Into Egypt

Bethlehem, Egypt

Why did God forbid the Magi to return to Herod, who had said that he wanted to worship the infant King? Herod, who is called "the Great," was great in wickedness, and in that only. He had deceived the Wise Men, but he could not deceive the all-wise God, who knew what Herod intended to do. He had been a bright boy, full of courage, and might have become a good and useful man. But the older he grew, the worse he became, until he was the worst of kings. He was a deceitful hypocrite, pretending to be good when he was not, he was sly, and cunning, and selfish. He was very cruel, and killed many people, including three of his own sons and his wife. He was jealous, especially of any one who he thought might become king instead of himself. He beheaded one man for this reason.

Herod was King of the Jews in that part of the Holy Land which was called Judea, when



Jesus was born. So, when he heard him called "the King of the Jews," he was jealous of Him and determined to kill Him, as he had others. When the learned men of Jerusalem showed him from the Bible where the new king would be born—in Bethlehem—he formed his wicked, secret plan. He thought it safe with himself, and that the Wise Men would not suspect him when he pretended that he wanted to worship the child. But he forgot that though he might deceive them, he could not deceive God, the Father of that infant king, who could defeat his wicked plan by revealing it to the Wise Men, and telling them not to go near him, but to return to their home another way.

But the infant child was not yet safe from the cruel king. So, when the Magi were departed, behold the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word." We may suppose that before the morning dawn they were on their way. They would not forget the house which for a while had been their home, as they hurriedly took from it their few garments and the presents the Magi had given them.

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Mary, riding on the gentle and patient beast, carrying her precious child, hiding it as well as she could for fear that one of Herod's men might be lurking near, and Joseph walking by their side, passed through the gate of Bethlehem. Starting while the morning star was yet in sight, they would be reminded of the Star of Bethlehem, which had guided the Wise Men to the spot they were leaving. They would remember that the same God who set both stars in the sky, and warned the Wise Men to go one way, and them to flee in another, would be their guide.

And so the long journey of eighty miles began. It must be slow, only as fast as the beast could carry his burden and Joseph could walk. But every hour of the day carried them farther from Herod, and so lessened their fears.

For a while they went up and down steep mountain roads, between vineyards and groves, looking upon the green grass, and smelling the sweet flowers of spring. But in a few days all was changed for the hot, dreary, sandy desert, where nothing grew except a few low shrubs, and sometimes a grove of palms. Under the shade of such, or of some lonely rock which the drifting sands did not cover, they rested.

At last the waters of the blue Mediterranean Sea were a pleasing contrast to the yellow sands of the desert. Crossing a shallow stream they rejoiced as they remembered that they had passed from the country of the dreaded Herod into the land of Egypt, whose king they need not fear.

In a little village, for probably three or four months, they found a friendly home. There stands to-day on the spot an old sycamore tree, which is believed to be the same which stood there then, or another which has grown from its roots. When I journeyed along the same road from Egypt to the Holy Land, I stopped before this tree and saw carved in the bark the names of many who have rested there on their journeys, because Joseph, Mary and Jesus had done so many years ago. It is called the Tree of the Holy Family.

Herod waited for the Magi to return from Bethlehem, but as they came not he "was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under." He hoped that among the twenty innocent children that were killed, Jesus would be one: and so could never become king instead of himself.

But He that was born King of the Jews was far away in Egypt.

Soon the hour came that Herod himself must die. His death was more horrible than you can imagine, because of what he suffered in body, and especially in mind, as he remembered the awful deeds of his life. After his death his son Archelaus became king.

“When Herod was dead, behold an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child’s life. And he arose and took the young child and his mother and came into the land of Israel.”

By the land of Israel the angel meant the Holy Land. He did not tell Joseph into what part of it to go. He probably started for Bethlehem. No wonder, for it was the birth-place of Jesus, and the home of His ancestors. There Ruth had lived. It was “the City of David,” her great-grandson. As Jesus was called “the son of David,” it seemed fitting that Bethlehem should be His home. It was a sacred place, to which angels had come to sing of His coming to

the earth. It was near the Holy City, also called "the City of the Great King," which He was to become, though not in the way the people of Jerusalem expected. There was the Temple, the most sacred spot on earth, which the growing child might often visit to learn of God, and worship Him as He could nowhere else.

So Joseph journeyed toward Bethlehem. "But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go thither." What should he do? Where should he go? God, whose angel had told him to flee into Egypt, and then to leave it, warned him in a dream not to go to Bethlehem. As the Magi had been directed to go from there by another way from what they had planned, that Jesus might escape the cruelty of Herod, so Joseph was told not to go there. Thus He escaped the cruelty of Archelaus, the wicked son of the wicked father.

Before Jesus was born, Joseph and Mary had lived in the town of Nazareth, in the northern part of the Holy Land, called Galilee. So, "they returned into Galilee to their own city, Nazareth." Here Jesus was to spend most of His life on the earth. He was so young when taken there, and

it was his home so long, that many thought He was born there.

When Joseph obeyed the two commands of God—that he should go to Egypt, and then that he should not return to Bethlehem—two things came true which the Bible said would happen: one was that Jesus should be called out of Egypt; and the other was that He should be called a Nazarene, because living in Nazareth. The Bible had also said that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. God only can tell what will come to pass. Such things are told in the Bible: So we know that it is the Book of God.

Chapter VII

The Early Home of Jesus

Nazareth

When Jesus lived in the Holy Land it was divided into three parts. The southern was called Judea ; the middle, Samaria ; the northern, Galilee. Some portions of Galilee were beautiful plains ; others had many mountains. In this latter part was Nazareth, near the largest plain, three hundred feet above it. In a small, rich, beautiful valley, it was encircled by fifteen rounded hills, as if they would protect the precious child whom kings would destroy. It was so full of flowers that some say Nazareth, meaning flowery, was named after them.

We sometimes speak of the brightest and best child as the flower of the family. Jesus was the wisest and best of all people. He has been called the flower of the human race. So Nazareth is a fitting name for the home of Jesus. So many of the houses were built of white stone that it was sometimes called the "White City." This would

be another fitting name for the home of the Holy One, who lived in it. The streets were narrow and long, like the lanes of our cities. They were not well kept, and were the common places for fowls and dogs, beggars and children.

One of these houses was the home of Joseph and his family. We cannot know just where it was, though a spot is pointed out to travellers as the place where it stood. As he was very poor, we may think of his house as being of only one story, its flat roof covering a single room, which was parlor, bedroom, sitting-room, dining-room and kitchen all in one. There was no chimney or glass window. By day it was lighted by a narrow opening in the wall. At night there was no cheerful gas or electric light, but a dim lamp hung from the ceiling in the middle of the room. There was no pretty furniture; no pictures were on the walls, but on shelves against them were quilts rolled up by day and unrolled at night for beds on the floor or on the roof, which was flat, and used for many purposes by day and night.

Much of the simple cooking was done out of doors. This was easy to do, because the climate was very mild. The wheat, ground by hand between two stones, was baked upon a hot stone.





Bread, fish and fruit were the chief kinds of food.

In such a home was Jesus. There are no books to tell us just how He lived and what He did, but we know something of the customs of the people then and there ; and so we may think of Him as like them in many things, but without sin. We know much about Him when he was older, and this helps us to understand what He must have been as a boy.

There were no photographs in those days. There are no true pictures of Him, but we may form pictures in our minds that help us to see Him in His home.

He is with His mother, Mary. She has a long blue dress and a cap with little brazen ornaments around it, and a white cloth over her head and shoulders. Jesus wears a red cap, a little loose jacket of white or blue, and a sash of different colors. Sometimes he is following her as she is about her work, or is sitting near her on a mat or a wooden, painted stool ; sometimes He is watching Joseph at work in the carpenter's shop. Often He goes with His mother to the village spring, to which women go to-day as Mary went two thousand years ago. It still is called " Mary's Well."

As I once pitched my tent near it to spend the night I felt that there was one spot in Nazareth where I might feel sure that Jesus had been.

As soon as He could speak, His mother would teach Him to pray. When He was five years old He would begin, like other Jewish boys at that age, to read the Old Testament Scriptures—that part of the Bible which was written before He was born. It has been called “Our Lord’s Bible,” because it is what He read and studied.

There He found the stories of Joseph and Ruth and David. There He might read about Himself, without then understanding who was meant. We know He learned much of the Bible and could repeat many portions of it. We can believe that He committed many of them to memory when He was a boy. What David wrote about a good man describes Jesus: “His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night.”

For the first few years Jesus studied the Scriptures only. In His home He had probably only parts of the Old Testament, because the whole was too costly for a poor family. Very few of the people had the whole, though nearly all had a part. There were no story-books or

pictures such as are of so much interest and help to children now. On the Sabbath Jesus went to the village synagogue, and formed a habit he never changed. Long after His boyhood, and after He had left his home, it is said, "He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up ; and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day."

When Jesus was old enough he went to the village school, for His parents were too poor to send Him to the higher school in Jerusalem ; it was in the synagogue, which was the Jewish church. The teacher was called a Rabbi. Nearly every boy in the Holy Land went to such a school ; so that there were few Jews who could not read and write. They had no school books ; so must learn from what the teacher said. They studied arithmetic, and the history of their nation, and something of natural history.

But their chief study was the Scriptures. The Rabbi was not satisfied if they could only read them : they must remember what they read, and be able to answer his many questions. It was like having a Sabbath-school every day. These Scriptures were not printed. There was no printing in those days. They were written on

skins, unrolled for reading, and then rolled up and carefully put away for the next time.

All the teaching that Jesus had was at His home and in the public school. But He increased in wisdom, being taught also by His Father in Heaven.

In thought we can follow the boy Jesus when not in His home, nor in the Rabbi's school; when with His brothers and sisters, and the boys and girls with whom He played, among whom He must have been known as the best boy in Nazareth; never speaking a cross or unkind word, never deceiving, never quarrelsome; always respectful and helpful; doing all He could to make others happy; as a son, a friend, a pupil, the perfect boy.

All we know about Jesus is what we learn from the Gospels—the New Testament Books of Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There have been written about Him some stories which are so foolish and unlike what we do know, that we cannot believe them. It is said that when a child He could do wonders, such as stretching a short board to the length He wished, and turning his playmates into kids. Here is another: “When the boys interrupted Jesus in His play,



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GOD'S HOLY COMMANDMENTS

H. Sinkel

or ran against Him in the street of the village, He looked upon them and denounced them, and they fell down and died." That was not like Jesus. Here is another story: "He and other children went out to play together, busying themselves in making clay into the shapes of various birds and beasts; whereupon Jesus commanded His beasts to walk and His birds to fly, and so excelled them all." He did excel them all, but not in this way: it was in goodness. When he was older He did wonderful things, not simply to show what He could do, but to do good and to prove that He was the Son of God.

But there is a story of a different kind, which we would be willing to believe if we had any proof that it was true. It is this: The boys of Nazareth gathered around the child Jesus, calling Him their King. They spread their garments on the ground, and He sat upon them. They made a wreath of flowers and put it as a crown upon His head. As if they were the pages of a King, they waited upon Him, standing in rows on His right hand and on His left, ready to do His bidding. They called to every one passing by, saying: "Come hither and adore the King."

With a perfect body, and doing all He could

to keep it so, we may think of Jesus' enjoyment of child-life, as He wandered about the hills around Nazareth. There grew daisies and crocuses, poppies and tulips, marigolds and mignonettes, and the lilies, which He afterwards told the people to behold that they might understand about the heavenly Father's care. Like other boys He watched the flight of butterflies and sparrows and the many-colored birds of the mountains; and listened to the cooing of the doves on the housetops, and the songs of the larks flying over them.

The white orange blossoms, the scarlet pomegranates, the light green oaks, the dark green palms, cypresses and olives, would please His eye as He rambled among them alone or with His companions.

The last Bible record we have of His childhood is this: "The child grew and waxed strong in spirit: and the grace of God was upon Him."

Chapter VIII

The First Journey to Jerusalem

Galilee, Samaria

The age of twelve was the dividing line between childhood and youth. A Jewish boy was then called "a son of God" and "a son of the law," because he was now old enough to read the Scriptures himself, and understand much of what they taught, and of the services of the synagogue. It was then that He went the first time to Jerusalem to attend a great religious feast called the Passover. This was the great event in the life of a Jewish boy.

Joseph and Mary went every year to the Passover. When Jesus was twelve years old He went with them. In the month of April, on the eighth day of which the feast began, they left their home in Nazareth for their journey of eighty miles to the Holy City. Their caravan was composed of pilgrims like themselves. The veiled women and old men rode on camels, mules, horses and asses. The young men walked, carrying their

pilgrim staves in one hand, while with the other they led a beast of burden. The boys walked till tired, then mounted a horse or mule, or were lifted upon a camel.

The caravan descended the mountains of Galilee by the same rocky and dusty road down which the traveller comes to-day. They were glad to reach the dells and hollows of the lower slopes, where grew the green olive, fig and karob trees, and the prickly pear.

Reaching a plain called Esdraelon, they rode among the many-colored flowers, which made it appear like a beautiful carpet, or between vast corn-fields on either side of the road. They crossed little streams which flowed into the River Kishon, of which their Scriptures told them in story and song.

Mirth and music enlivened their journey, especially for the young. With drum and timbrel and harp, they sang the pilgrim psalms which they had learned from the Scriptures. They would spend the first night beside a fountain, which remains to this day, and enjoy the beauty and fragrance of the gardens about it. As they journeyed onward they passed through Samaria, with its fig-yards and olive groves. In the valley

between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, they would rest and draw water from Jacob's well, where Jesus sat in after years weary and thirsty. Here they would fill their water-skins from which to drink until they reached another well. Often they would refresh themselves with the dates, melons and cucumbers which grew by the roadside.

So they journeyed on until Jerusalem was in sight. That was an hour of wonder and joy for the boy Jesus, as He looked beyond its high walls and saw for the first time the Temple—the holy and beautiful House which was to become more glorious because of His presence in it.

The pilgrims entered the Holy City and attended the feast of the Passover, and then the caravan started back for Nazareth.

There is an old story that the boy Jesus left the caravan and returned to the city. But Luke tells us that He "tarried behind in Jerusalem." Why was this? Was it, because, boy like, full of curiosity, He wanted to see more of the strange city, and wander over the neighboring hills, as He did in Galilee? Or, was the Temple so attractive to His young eyes that He wanted to linger there and enjoy yet more its beauty?

Or, did he want to watch the priests in services such as he had not seen in the synagogue in Nazareth? No, it was not from boyish curiosity that He "tarried behind in Jerusalem." Why He did so we shall see.



Chapter IX

In the House of His Heavenly Father

Jerusalem

Thus far in our story we have thought of Jesus in Nazareth as like any other child, but without sin. But Jesus in the Temple, at twelve years of age, had passed His childhood. Like every other Jewish boy He was now looked upon as a youth, who was to do more and receive more than a child. But He was more than a common Jewish boy. He had reached the age when, and had come to the place where, He probably thought that He was different from all others. No one, not even His mother, understood all His thoughts about Himself. We do not know—we cannot know—just what they were, though we know more about them than even Mary did, because we have the story of His life when He was older.

We may believe that Jesus in the Temple began to think of Himself, if He never did before, as the Son of God, as having come from heaven, and so unlike any other being on earth.

During the childhood of Jesus, Joseph had been in the place of a kind earthly father to Him, and probably He called Him by that name. But when He made that visit to the Temple, He thought of GOD as His father. He wanted to learn all that He could of what the Scriptures taught about Him. He had learned much in His home and in the synagogue in Nazareth, and from the village Rabbis. But the wisest men of the nation were in Jerusalem. They had a school in the Temple for all who wished to be taught. So He went there to learn—not to teach, as some have thought.

As He entered the room and quietly seated Himself on the pavement, “in the midst of the doctors,”—the wise teachers who encircled Him—they must have asked themselves who this stranger-boy, coming alone, could be. His modesty and reverence, His bright face and close attention, His earnest and solemn look, must have pleased them even before He uttered a word.

So when at last He broke His silence with a question, they were very ready to listen. As one question followed another, and He made answers to theirs, “all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding.” His very

questions must have taught them lessons of wisdom—not so much about Jewish laws to be obeyed, as the spirit of love and obedience to God. No such pupil had ever sat at their feet. When He was older and increased yet more in knowledge, people asked in astonishment, “Whence hath this man this wisdom?” They did not understand that it was the wisdom from God.

Like His forefather David, when young, He was at this time “but a youth, and of a fair countenance.” As those Rabbis saw it lighted up by the new thoughts burning within Him, they did not think of Him as the son of David, of whom their Scriptures told, and for whose coming they were even then looking, but in a different way from that in which He had suddenly appeared in their midst. In that Galilean boy they saw not what He was discovering Himself to be—the Son of God.

“The child Jesus tarried in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew it not.” How this happened we know not. “But they, supposing Him to be in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances.” This was at their first night’s

encampment. "A lost child" is always a sad cry. The discovery of Mary's loss was a new experience to her. For twelve years her son had been at her side or within her call. Anxiety was a word the meaning of which she had never known concerning Him. There had been no occasion for it. In all the years of a sweet, obedient, loving childhood, He had been a constant comfort and joy. She had been free from many annoyances and sorrows which many mothers have known.

Where now was her faithful boy? What had happened to Him? Did she have a memory of His infant days when she fled with Him from Herod and Archelaus; and did she wonder if it were possible that some jealous ruler had kept an eye upon Him?

The sleepless night passed. The caravan continued its way homeward toward Nazareth, without Joseph and Mary, who returned to Jerusalem. They began "seeking Him" in the places where they thought He might be found, without visiting the one where, as he afterwards told them, they should have looked first of all.

Another night passed, and "seeking Him" again, "they found Him in the Temple"—not in



the part for worship, but in the school-room of the Rabbis. Had some one told them of a strange, wonderful child that for two days had "tarried behind" when the Passover ended?

Joseph and Mary on entering the room must have been as much astonished as the doctors were when the young pupil came among them.

Mary, the loving, anxious yet rejoicing mother, was the first to speak. She did not call Him by His name Jesus. The mother-heart was full, and she called Him "Son." Yet there was a tone of sadness in her gentle reproof as she asked, "Why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing."

We feel certain that these were the first reproving words ever spoken by her to Him. What shall His answer be? We listen to it as the first recorded words of Jesus on earth. They were spoken in the Temple—not where he afterward addressed the multitude, but in the school-room—to His mother. He answered her question by asking another. It was this: "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

These words must have seemed strange to

Mary. He had always been so careful in speech and conduct, never saying or doing an unkind or undutiful thing, that she could not help wondering. But though His words were strange, they were not unkind nor disrespectful. Let us remember that the same words may be spoken either in a harsh tone, with an angry look, or in a kind yet earnest manner. This latter way must have been that in which Jesus spoke to His mother. The words were child-like, yet very wise. They are such as no other child could use with the same meaning, because no other child is like Him.

Now, let us try to think what Jesus meant when He said to His mother, "How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" It is as if He had said: "I wonder that you have looked for Me along the road, and in the houses of the city. You know that GOD is MY FATHER. I must learn all I can about Him, and get ready for the work He sent Me from Heaven to do. This Temple is My Father's House. Here, not in Nazareth, is the best place for Me to learn. Did you not know? did you not think? that I must be here? Am I not doing the very thing you would expect Me to do here and now?"

We are told that Mary "understood not the saying which He spake." She did not know all He meant, but she "kept all these sayings in her heart," as she did those of the shepherds in Bethlehem. She not only remembered them, but thought about them over and over, year after year, until she understood them better when she saw the wonderful things He did, showing Himself to be the Son of God.

When Jesus told Mary that He must be about His Father's business, He did not mean that He meant to leave His home in Nazareth, or her and Joseph, or not to obey them as He had always done. Though He now understood Himself to be the Son of God, and superior to Joseph and even His mother, He left the Temple, His Father's House, "and went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them."

Noble boy! A beautiful example for every boy and girl, in all places and at all times, who learns the story of Jesus, the loving and obedient Son of Mary.

Chapter X

Jesus the Carpenter

Nazareth

When Jesus returned from Jerusalem to Nazareth He entered upon a new period of His life. Like other boys, as required by Jewish law, He learned a trade. He became "subject" to Joseph in his carpenter's shop, and at last was known as "the carpenter, the son of Mary." Can this be He whom the angel of the plain called "Saviour, Christ the Lord," and over whom the angels sang, and whom the Magi worshipped? Do we find Him in a carpenter's shop, learning to make stools for the homes in Nazareth, and yokes for the oxen, and plows for the farmer? Yes, it is He. Then let none be ashamed of honest toil. In it we believe He was careful and faithful.

We have one more record of these early days—that He "increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man;" "a child so lovely and beautiful that Heaven and earth appear to

smile upon Him together." Though not in school, He "increased in wisdom." Unlike many a youth, He continued to study the Scriptures. He learned many lessons from nature, by which we mean the things which God has made. Above all, He learned from His Father. When He was older, men were so astonished that they said: "Whence hath this man this wisdom?"

He increased in favor with man. His goodness could not be hid. He must have been known as the model young man of Nazareth.

He increased in favor with God, who honored Him more and more as He saw the work of Jesus on the earth. At last He could say concerning His Father's business, "It is finished." Thirty years after that saying, His Apostle Paul wrote: "God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name."

For eighteen years, from the time Jesus was twelve years old until He was thirty, we have no record of His life. We wish we had. We think of His youth and early manhood in which He was preparing for the three years of His ministry. He knew Himself to be what others did not know. His brothers and sisters and companions had no thought that the most wonderful being in

the world was among them. The priests and Rabbis in the synagogue thought Him the same as any other boy or young man worshipper, unless, perhaps, that He was more thoughtful and reverent than they.

One of the hills above Nazareth is nearly eighteen hundred feet above the sea. It is easy to imagine that He often resorted thither, as He did to the mountains at a later day, for prayer and meditation. This was a more fitting place than the flat roof of His home, often used for such purposes.

From that height he looked down into the village, to the distant snow-covered Hermon, the near plain of Esdraelon, Mount Tabor and other places that were to become sacred because of His journeys and ministry among them. In the far distance He saw the Mediterranean Sea, over which His gospel was to be carried towards distant parts of the earth unknown to the people of His day. To me this was the most sacred spot about Nazareth, for I felt that I might be treading in His footsteps.

What thoughts He had here of God as His Father, and of Himself as the Son of God, and of the business which the Father sent the Son into

the world to do. He was so different from all others that His life among men was lonely. But He could say, as He did say, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

The time had come for Him to leave the quiet life in Nazareth and begin His work among men—a life of toil and trouble and opposition, but one in which He was ever to go about doing good and blessing mankind. He chose his future home on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Chapter XI

John the Baptist

The Desert. The Jordan

What is a kingdom? By it we generally mean a country ruled by a king or queen. This is a kingdom of the earth. But God does not rule like an earthly king or queen. He rules the spirits of men. All good spirits on the earth and all spirits in heaven together make His Kingdom. It is called the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven. Of this Kingdom Jesus was King. During thirty years of His life only a few people, like the shepherds of the plain, and Simeon and Anna, understood who He was or what He was to become.

At last He was ready to make Himself known. But before He did so, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." He was not "sent" from heaven as was Jesus, whose home was there before He came to the earth. But there were some wonderful things about John's infancy. Before He was born an angel appeared to his





father, Zacharias, and told him to call his son John, as the angel Gabriel had told Mary to call her son Jesus. The angel told Zacharias that John would "be great in the sight of the Lord," and that he would "go before" Jesus. By this he meant that John would preach about Him, telling people that they would soon see Him, and that they must get ready for Him by repenting of their sins.

John was a holier man than the people about him, and was saddened by their sins. He wanted to be alone with God, to pray to Him, and prepare himself to "go before" Jesus.

So he left his home and lived in the wilderness of Judea, we know not how many years. It was a desert, whose rocky mountains were full of caves, where the sun never shone. In the valleys there was no variety of flowers, such as grew around Nazareth, but dry plants, which grew without water, and the white broom-brushes, which bloom in March and April. His food was the locusts, which leaped and flew about him; and honey, which he found in the clefts of the rocks. His only drink was water from the mountain springs. The only living things he saw were animals, such as foxes and wild goats on

the crags, partridges and vultures flying over them.

He was a strange-looking man. His hair was long, having never been cut when he was thirty years old. His dress was made of camel's hair, rudely woven. It was fastened with a leathern girdle, such as was worn by the poor.

When the time was near for Jesus to leave Nazareth and begin His ministry, John left the wilderness, where he had lived alone, and appeared among men. He told them that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. He meant that Jesus, the King of the spirits of men, had come to the world, and that they would soon see Him.

He told them that they could not be of His Kingdom unless they repented of their sins. People in all parts of the Holy Land heard of his preaching, and multitudes came to hear him on the banks of the River Jordan. They thought him a wonderful prophet, such as had not been in the world for five hundred years. Many of them were common people, who wanted to learn and become good; but some, who thought themselves wise and good enough, came only from curiosity.

He told them that they must also be baptized with water. He did not mean that water would make their souls clean as it did their bodies, but that it would show their repentance, which is a change from bad to good. Many were "baptized of him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins."

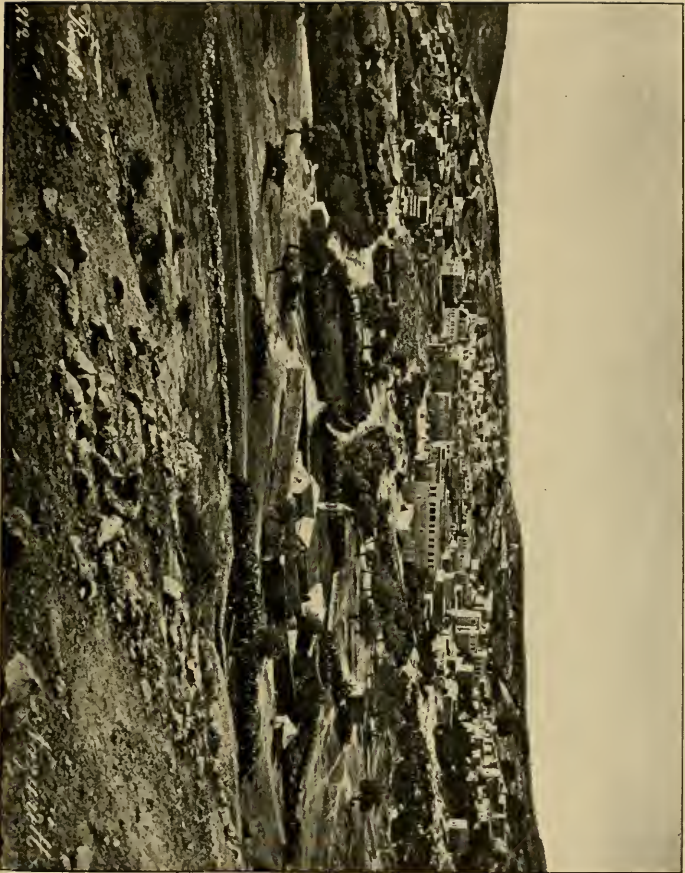
Chapter XII

The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

The Jordan. Desert of Judea

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him” This was the first act of Jesus in beginning His ministry. He left His home in Nazareth, and Mary, His mother, and the quiet scenes in which He had lived in childhood and youth and early manhood. He was no longer Jesus the carpenter. He was to be the great Teacher and to do wonderful things, which would show that He was the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

Though the mother of Jesus and the mother of John were cousins, we do not know that their sons, who must have known of each other, had ever met. One day, “when all the people were baptized,” a stranger came alone to John, and asked that he be also. There must have been something in his appearance that attracted the Baptist’s attention. Of the multitudes who had





stood before him there had not been one like this stranger. They had come bowing before him, confessing their sins ; but this new-comer had no sins to confess. His words and tone, His manner and look, all showed love and goodness. Who could it be ? Was it possible that Jesus stood before him ? Yes, it was He. Perhaps the Spirit of God revealed it to him then and there,

When Jesus asked to be baptized John forbade Him saying : “ I have need to be baptized of Thee and comest Thou to me ? ” But Jesus answered, “ Suffer it to be so now. Let Me be baptized. ” He believed that God commanded it. Though He had no sins to be forgiven, He would be an example to those who had. He wanted them to understand that John was right in his preaching about repentance and baptism. So “ He was baptized of John in Jordan. ”

Then His first act was prayer to His Father, who was looking down from Heaven on the solemn scene in the life of His Son on earth. “ And, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him. ”

John also beheld the wonderful sight. He was now sure that Jesus was the King of the

Kingdom of Heaven, about which he had been preaching.

“And, lo, a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art my beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased.” Remember this voice, for we shall hear of it again. All Christians are the children of God, but to Jesus only does He say, “Thou art My beloved Son.”

Jesus, after His baptism, went from the Jordan into the wilderness, where He would be alone with His Father, and think and pray about the great work He was beginning. He was “with the wild beasts”—the wolves, the wild boars, the tigers and the lions of the mountains of that region. But He had so much power over them that they did Him no harm.

With little or no food, “He fasted forty days and forty nights,” and became very hungry and weak. During this time He was “tempted of the devil,” who tried to make Him sin when He had come to “save the people from their sins.” If Jesus had sinned He could not be what the shepherd of the plain called Him, the “Saviour, Christ, the Lord.”

During those forty days Satan planned a great temptation for Him. But Jesus resisted him,

repeating to him words from the Scriptures, with which He had become familiar, and which He was ever ready to use.

Then Satan tried another temptation. But Jesus answering, said unto him, "It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

But the devil, hoping that he might at last make Jesus sin just once, tried a third great temptation. He asked Jesus to worship him, and promised to give Him power over all the kingdoms of the world—which were not his to give. Then answered Jesus and said unto him, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: do not try any more to make Me sin: I will not obey you: for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.'"

Satan saw that it was of no use for him to try any longer. He had not conquered Jesus, but Jesus had conquered him. So he left Him alone with the wild beasts. They did not try to harm His body as Satan had tried to harm His spirit. But He was not alone long, for angels came to Him with food for His body, and gave joy and strength to His spirit. Blessed angels; they were always ready to come from Heaven, to help Him in weakness and to comfort Him in sorrow.

Every child may think of Jesus as the tempted but sinless child ; every youth may think of Him as the tempted but sinless youth ; every man may think of Him as the tempted but sinless man. Each of them may feel that Jesus knows how to pity and help because He Himself was tempted.

Remember, too, how Jesus learned many Bible words, and how they helped Him in resisting temptation.



Chapter XIII

First Disciples

The Jordan

Jesus returned from the wilderness where He had been tempted, to a place on the River Jordan, where John was preaching to a multitude of people. As He was coming toward them, John exclaimed: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him." "This is the Son of God." But the people did not understand, as John did, who and what Jesus was. They were not ready to think of Him as the Lamb of God to take away their sins, nor to become His disciples.

The next day Jesus was walking along the bank of the Jordan, thinking, we may believe, of His triumph over Satan; of the work He was ready to do; and of some who would be with Him in it during the rest of His life.

John and two of his disciples were standing where they could see Him. John looked ear-

nestly upon Him, and repeated to them the words He had spoken to the multitude the day before—"Behold the Lamb of God." The two disciples heard him speak. They thought of Jesus as they had not before. They wanted to know more about Him. They wanted to be with Him, and to have Him teach them as John had taught them. So they "followed Jesus," quietly coming nearer to Him until they could hear His voice, when turning around He kindly spoke to them, saying, "What seek ye?"

With honor and reverence they called Him "Rabbi"—teacher. These were the first to give Him that name. They believed, as John had told them, that Jesus was greater than he. They answered His question with another—"Where dwellest Thou?" And then He gave them this invitation, "Come and see." The place to which He invited them was probably a little booth or shed, made of palm or other branches, but it was a charming place because Jesus was there.

No doubt, one of these visitors was John, having the same name as the Baptist, whom he was now to leave for a new teacher. He was to become known as St. John the Apostle. We shall learn much of him in the story of Jesus.



THE CALLING OF PETER AND ANDREW

‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’—Matt. iv. 19.

Many years after that visit, he wrote of it, remembering the day and the hour when he entered that little booth.

The other one who followed Jesus was named Andrew. He was so full of wonder and joy at what he saw and heard that he hastened to his brother Simon, crying out: "We have found the Christ." "And he brought him to Jesus." Simon was also called Peter. We shall learn much of him in the story of Jesus.

The next day Jesus started for Galilee. Probably His three new friends, John, Andrew and Peter, went with Him. On the way they saw a young man named Philip. Jesus spoke two words to him—"Follow Me." It was the first time we know of His speaking these words to any man. Philip joyfully obeyed.

It was the custom of pious Jews, who had right thoughts about God and the expected Messiah, to go daily to some quiet place in the shade of a tree, where they could be alone with God, and pray to Him and think a long time about Him. Such a man was Nathanael.

As Andrew's first act was to bring his brother Peter to Jesus, so Philip's first act was to bring his friend, Nathanael to Him. As Andrew had

exclaimed, "We have found the Christ," so Philip cried out, "We have found Him." As Jesus had asked Andrew and John to "come and see" Him, Philip asked Nathanael to "come and see" Jesus.

As he came, Jesus saw him, and spoke kindly of him, telling of his goodness. Nathanael asked, "Whence knowest Thou me?" Jesus answered and said unto him, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee." Nathanael, in astonishment at His wisdom, called Him "Rabbi," as John and Andrew had done. He also believed that Jesus was more than the Great Teacher: so he said to Him, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel."

Remember Andrew, John, Simon, Philip and Nathanael as the first disciples of Jesus; a good and happy company, part of a larger band of friends of Jesus, to be with Him wherever He went, to learn of Him, and to teach others about Him.

Chapter XIV

*The Lamb of God**

John the Baptist called Jesus the "Lamb of God." Why is He called a LAMB?

A lamb is *innocent*. It cannot do wrong. A little child does not sin. We say a child is as innocent as a lamb.

Jesus was innocent. He was a holy child and a holy man. On the earth He was often tempted, but He never did wrong.

A lamb is *harmless*. No persons or animals are afraid that it might hurt them. It is not cruel like a tiger.

Jesus was harmless. He never gave trouble or pain. No one feared Him. He was always kind, going about doing good, and trying to make people happy.

A lamb is *gentle*. It is quiet and tender. It is not fierce like a lion. It is never angry.

Jesus was gentle. People were often unkind to Him. They spoke unkindly to Him and about

* From the Author's Volume, "Great Truths Simply Told."

Him. They lied about Him. They treated Him cruelly, but He never spoke a cross word or did an angry thing. He tenderly took a young girl and a woman by the hand, and raised them up. He gently lifted a sick boy, and led a blind man. He softly put His hands on the heads of little children.

A lamb is *patient*. When it is sick or in pain, it lies quietly down all day and all night.

Jesus was patient. He suffered very much. He had great trouble of spirit, and pain of body. He suffered much on the cross, but he was always silent.

A lamb is *humble*. It does not strut like a peacock, or appear proud like some men and women.

Jesus was humble. In heaven he was highly exalted. Angels honored Him. He was like a great king, but He came down to earth and became a poor man. He humbled Himself.

A lamb *obeys* and *trusts* the shepherd. It follows him wherever he leads it, and takes food from his hand, and rests quietly in his arms.

Jesus obeyed and trusted His Father. When He was on the earth he said: "I have kept my Father's commandments." When He was dying

on the cross His last words were, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

Why is Jesus called the LAMB OF GOD ?

Before He came from heaven to earth, the Temple of God was in Jerusalem. In it was a table called an altar. A priest put things upon it, worshipping God.

A man brought a lamb to the priest by the altar, because God told him to do so. The lamb helped him to understand about Jesus. When the man brought the lamb from his home to the Temple, he remembered that Jesus would come from heaven to earth.

The lamb must not be lame, or blind, or sick, but well in all its body. The man would remember that Jesus would have a perfect body and a holy spirit.

The man put his hands on the head of the lamb and confessed his sins to God. He remembered that Jesus would forgive sins.

The lamb by the altar was bound and could not walk again. The man remembered that Jesus would be bound by wicked men, and go about doing good no more.

The bound lamb lay still and was dumb. The man remembered that Jesus would be patient and

not resist cruel men, but would be willing to suffer. The lamb was killed with a knife and laid upon the altar. The man remembered that Jesus would be nailed to a cross and die upon it.

God commanded a lamb to be killed, to help the man to understand about the death of Jesus. When he looked at the dead lamb, he would remember that Jesus would die for him.

Jesus was innocent, harmless, gentle, patient, humble, obedient and trustful, like a lamb. He died for all men that they might live forever in Heaven, if they repent of sin, and love, obey and serve Him. So Jesus is called "The Lamb of God."



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THE LORD'S MESSENGER *B. E. Murillo*

Chapter XV

The First Miracle

Cana

Jesus and His five disciples went to the little town of Cana in Galilee, a few miles from Nazareth. It was then a pretty place, but nobody lives there now. Only hunters go there for wild game.

It was the home of Nathanael. But Jesus had other friends who had invited Him and His disciples to a feast in their house. In it He also met His mother, whom He had left in Nazareth two months before. Much had happened to Him in that time, of which perhaps she did not know. She was delighted to meet Him again, with His new friends, John and Andrew, who would tell her of the wonderful things they had seen and heard on the Jordan, and how the Spirit of God had descended upon Him like a dove, and how a voice from Heaven had called Him God's beloved Son. She would think of what the angels had said about Him in Bethlehem, and remember

what He said in the Temple about God His Father.

Joseph having probably died, Mary would go to Jesus when she was in trouble, or wanted help, in Nazareth, or Cana, or anywhere else.

The home in which He found her in Cana was that of intimate friends, perhaps relations. We can think of the kind of house in which they lived. The court or yard was surrounded on three sides by covered porches opening into rooms, one of which was a reception-room or dining-room, where the feast was given. Its ceiling was high. It was lighted in the evening by lamps and candles. When a feast was given the room was made pleasant by such ornaments as they had. Carpets were spread on the floor, and the walls were hung with garlands. Around the tables were couches or benches, covered with soft cushions, on which the people reclined when they ate.

On the porch were kept jars of water for the washing of hands before and after eating, and of feet when a person entered the house. Shoes were not worn, but sandals, which did not protect from dust, and which were left outside the door.



In this house there was a wedding-feast. It was the home of the bridegroom. To it the bride had been brought from her father's house. She wore a long veil from her head to her feet, and a beautiful girdle, and a wreath of myrtle leaves. Her hair was flowing over her shoulders, and she wore many jewels. If she were too poor to own them, they were borrowed from her friends.

When she went from her father's house to that of the bridegroom, there was a joyful procession of her friends and companions. Some carried torches or lamps on poles. Some played on flutes or drums, others sang words such as these :

“ Her red cheeks are her own,
Her hair hangs waving as it grew.”

Wine and oil were distributed among the older people, and nuts among the children. Those nearest to the bride carried myrtle branches and chaplets of flowers. As the procession moved along the streets, everybody rose and cheered, or joined it ; and all praised the bride.

Then followed the wedding-feast, to which Jesus and His five disciples had been invited. He would join like others in the innocent pleasures of the evening, happy in seeing the young bride and bridegroom and their companions happy ; and

ready to do what He could to make them so ; as we shall see.

Mary, because she was an intimate friend, or relative, would be interested in having everything done properly, and help as she could.

She discovered, before the meal was ended, that the wine was all gone. She knew that if the family found it out they would be troubled, because some might think that they had been careless in not having enough for the friends they had invited. What should she do? We are told what she did. "The mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine." Did she expect Him to do anything about it? Did she think that perhaps her wonderful son could and would furnish the wine in some way that others could not? We do not know. His reply was something of the kind He gave her in the Temple—strange, hard to explain, but not unkind.

In the Temple He had made her understand that He was the Son of God. Now His life with her in Nazareth had ended. He must leave her and begin His ministry, the most important part of His Father's business, of which He had spoken in the Temple. He would remember and love her as His earthly mother, but she must now



think more of Him as the Son of His Father in Heaven.

His reply to Mary did not offend her. His tone and manner made her think He would do something about the wine. But whatever He meant, she felt that He was right. In all His early life He had been an obedient son, ever ready to do as she wished. But now, though she was His mother, she was obedient and trustful toward Him. She would have others be the same. So she said to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

"Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water, and they filled them up to the brim," without any thought of His purpose, or that He was using them in doing a marvelous thing.

"Draw out now," said He. As they did so the water was changed into wine. He told them to carry some to the governor of the feast, who, when he had tasted it, playfully told the bridegroom that, unlike others, he had saved the best for the last. Neither of them knew at first what Jesus had done. This was His first miracle, by which we mean a wonderful work which can be done only **by one who has the power of God.** This power

Jesus had, as we shall see again and again in the story of His life.

“His disciples believed on Him.” In Cana they were more sure than even on the banks of the Jordan that He was the Son of God.

“After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples.”

Chapter XVI

Beautiful Land and Sea

Gennesaret. Tiberias

The most charming region of the Holy Land was the Land of Gennesaret, which means the "Garden of Abundance." We think it rightly named when we read what one of its own people wrote of it, saying: "Its soil is so fruitful that all kinds of trees grow in it. Walnuts flourish in great plenty. Grapes and figs ripen in ten months of the year, and other fruits fill up the other months." He tells of the "sweetness of its waters, and the delicate temperature of its air, its palms, and oranges, and almonds and pomegranates and warm springs."

The foliage and flowers were of great variety, and its harvests were most abundant. Its villages and cities were more numerous and populous than those of any other part of the whole country.

But its greatest charm was a body of water, called by different names,—in the Old Testament, "the Sea of Chinnereth;" and in the New, "the

Sea ” or “Lake of Gennesaret ;” “the Sea of Tiberias ;” and “the Sea of Galilee.” It is a small inland sea, whose size contrasts with the greatness of its history. Its length is thirteen miles, and its greatest width is six. In shape it is sometimes compared to a harp ; and sometimes to a pear, broadened at the head, where it receives the waters of the River Jordan, which flow out from its southern end.

There is a level beach around it, where our city boys and girls would delight to play in its smooth sands, and with its tiny and its larger shells, and the black and white stones which, if they could speak, would tell of the hidden fires by which they were formed. They would be careful of the hot springs, and of such a scalding stream as I well remember for the burning I had in taking a stone from its bottom.

On the eastern shore there is a green strip, one-fourth of a mile wide, beyond which hills rise nine hundred feet above the lake. The grassy slopes change to rocky cliffs, barren and desolate. Somewhere on these lonely heights our Lord used to go for rest and retirement, alone or with His disciples. Between them are deep, dark valleys, down which flow rivulets into the lake, and

through which the pent-up winds rush upon it. When at rest the waters are as clear as glass, reflecting the shrubs and flowers on the bank, especially in May, when the bright red and white oleanders fringe the shores. Above all are numberless birds of brilliant colors and varied forms.

“ How pleasant to me thy deep blue waves,
O Sea of Galilee !

For the glorious One Who came to save
Hath often stood by thee.

* * * * *

Graceful around thee the mountains meet,
Thou calm, reposing Sea,

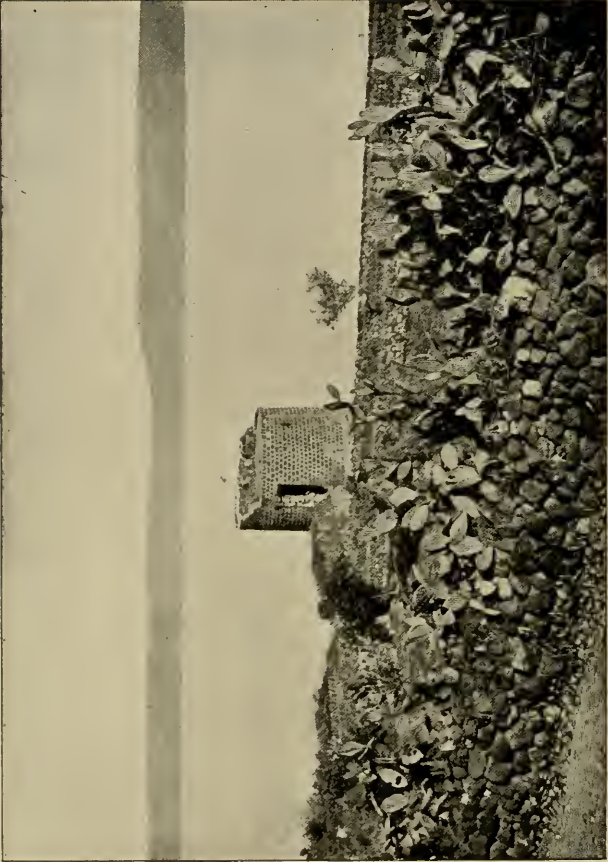
But ah ! far more, the beautiful feet
Of Jesus walked o'er thee.”

In the beautiful land of Gennesaret, on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, a little way from its head, was the city of Capernaum, one of the chief cities of Galilee. It was in “an earthly paradise,” another fitting earthly home for Him who “made all things for Himself.” Capernaum gained what Nazareth lost. It was called “His own city.” This was its greatest honor for all time, though its people believed it not.

It is possible that here for a while Jesus had a home with His mother and brethren, but that they

finally returned to Nazareth, when He became a permanent guest of Peter, whose home was here, as well as that of Andrew, James and John. Here He performed some of His mightiest deeds, and, in its synagogue, where He often taught, He revealed some of His greatest truths. From Capernaum He went on His journeys, and to it He returned for labor and rest.

We must not think of the Land of Gennesaret as appearing now as it did in the days of Christ. It has become a land of ruins. The sad things which He said would happen, because of the wickedness of the people and their rejection of Him and His preaching, have come true. Cities and villages where He preached and wrought miracles are not there now. It is doubtful where were the few whose names are preserved. What God made remains; what man reared is cast down. The palms still grow, but they seem like sentinels guarding nameless ruins. Jackals and hyenas prowl and howl where merry children played and sang. The turtle-dove, the favorite bird of the Jews, murmurs as if in complaint over their desolate homes. Streams, once giving life to thriving villages, babble among the tumbled walls. Small companies of robbers, or aimless wanderers, seek



paths where great caravans from Damascus to Egypt journeyed on frequented roads. Instead of four thousand vessels—of war and pleasure and fishing—which once floated on the Sea of Galilee, I did not find a single one of any kind. The roller-bird, king-fisher and pelican are almost the only fishers where Peter and Andrew cast their nets.

Even Capernaum, the "Own city" of Jesus, has been sought long and diligently, until at last its ruins are supposed to be found. One thing only remains to tell its story, and that is the best of all—the white synagogue in which He preached. Its foundation walls tell of its size ; its fallen pillars, of its departed glory ; and the carved device of the pot of manna, once over its doorway, reminds us of the day when the Jews in that synagogue called manna the bread from Heaven, and Jesus called Himself the Bread of Life, which came down from Heaven.

Chapter XVII

In His Temple. Nicodemus

Jerusalem

After a short stay in Capernaum, Jesus went with the great caravan of pilgrims, which in the month of April went to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem. We do not know whether or not He had been there since He was twelve years old. But He must have recalled that first journey. He then went from Nazareth with a boy's curiosity on his first visit to the Holy City, and with a special interest in the Temple where He was a learner. He now went from Capernaum as the great Teacher.

On His first visit He was beginning to understand who He was—"the Son of God." He now understood it fully, and was ready to proclaim it in the place where probably the great thought dawned upon Him. Four hundred years before, a prophet, taught by God, had said to the Jews, "The Lord Whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His Temple." That time had come.

But on reaching the Temple, the Holy House, His Father's House, He was saddened and greatly displeased at what He saw. There were oxen, and sheep, and doves for use in the Temple service, but which should not be gathered within its courts for sale. There were also the tables of the money-dealers. With holy indignation He drove them all out saying, "Make not My Father's House a house of merchandise."

In calling the Temple His Father's House, He claimed that He was the Son of God, and therefore had a right to drive from it all improper things.

He also showed His power by miracles, probably of healing. And "many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did." But not all believed. Most of the leaders of the Jewish nation hated Him, and from that hour treated Him shamefully, unjustly and cruelly as long as He lived. But not all of them felt and acted thus. Some believed Jesus to be what He claimed to be, and were His friends.

One of them was named Nicodemus. He was a rich man, a Ruler and a Rabbi. He was honest and wanted to know the truth. He was just, and wanted the rulers to treat Jesus justly.

He was tender and pitied Jesus when they treated Him cruelly. He was modest and timid, and afraid to have it known that he was friendly to Him.

Believing that Jesus was a teacher come from God, he went to Him by night for instruction. Jesus told him about the great change that must be in the spirits of men if they would belong to His kingdom on earth and in heaven. He told him that the Spirit of God changes the spirit in man. He told him that he had come down from Heaven, and was the Son of God, the Saviour whom the Jews were expecting. He told him of God's wonderful love for all men. Remember these words of Jesus :

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”



Chapter XVIII

At the Well of Sychar

Shechem

We are told that Jesus "left Judea and departed again into Galilee. And He must needs go through Samaria."

In Samaria were grassy plains and rounded hills covered with trees, especially walnut, almond, pear, plum and fir. There are two mountains near together, Ebal and Gerizim, in the region of which have happened many things of which the Bible tells. Between them is the rich green Vale of Shechem.

The people who occupied that region were called Samaritans. They hated the Jews, and the Jews hated them. They had little dealing with each other. The two peoples sadly differed in their religious beliefs and practices. The Samaritans believed that Gerizim, instead of Jerusalem, was the most sacred spot upon earth. They had a temple upon it for two hundred years. It had been destroyed one hundred and

twenty-five years before Christ, but they still considered the mountain the proper place of worship, and every Samaritan, wherever he was, turned his face toward Gerizim when he prayed. Their chief city was called Sychar.

Near it was a parcel of ground which Jacob had bought long before, and where he lived, and from which he took the journey of which we have spoken, with his young son Joseph, to the "Tower of Edar" on the Shepherds' Plain. Jacob, when dying in Egypt where Joseph was ruler, gave this parcel of ground to him, who gave commandment on his dying bed that he should be buried there. His tomb remains to this day, near a well which his father dug, known as "Jacob's Well." It is one of the places in the Holy Land where we may feel sure that Christ has been. It does not appear now as He saw it, for, like many other things He beheld, it is in ruins—a dry pit nearly filled with rubbish, only twenty feet in depth, instead of one hundred or one hundred and fifty, as it probably was when the boy Joseph played around it and drank of its waters.

It was the hour of noon when Jesus, on His journey from Judea to Galilee, arrived at Jacob's Well. Weary and thirsty, He threw Himself

down, probably on one of the stone seats of an alcove which sheltered it from the sun.

He was left there alone, while His disciples who accompanied Him went to the neighboring city to buy food. Meanwhile He must have mused on the associations of the spot. He would recall His first visit to the place, when twelve years old, on His first journey to Jerusalem, and think of how much had happened to Him since that time. He would remember that, long before He was born, Abraham pitched his tent on or near the same spot, where God promised that this beautiful country should be given to his children's children, and how that promise had been fulfilled. He would think of Jacob, and of Joseph, on whose tomb his eye rested as he sat on the well.

But He was not long alone. He was interrupted by a woman coming to draw water. Even before His speech would show whence He came, she knew Him to be a Jew, from His appearance and His dress, which may have had the white fringe worn by the Jews instead of the blue worn by her countrymen. But He knew more of her than she did of Him—much more than she suspected—as being ignorant, and sinful, and not respected by the people who knew of her.

“Jesus saith unto her, Give Me to drink.” But, instead of doing so, she expressed her surprise that He, a Jew, should ask for a drink from her, a Samaritan. This led to a very interesting and important conversation. To understand it we must remember several things.

The wish for water to drink is thirst of body : the wish for peace and joy is thirst of spirit. Water can quench the thirst in our bodies : Christ can give peace to our spirits. Bodily thirst, though quenched, comes again, as long as we live : the peace Christ gives is for this life and eternal life in heaven. As we have seen, “God gave” Him that man might have eternal life. Christ was with the woman, but she did not know it was He. He was more anxious to give her peace and joy—the water of life—than that she should give Him water from the well.

Remembering all this, we can understand His words to her when she wondered that He, a Jew, asked a drink of her, a Samaritan. He said to her : “If Thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink ; Thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water.”

As He spoke, her feeling toward him changed,

as did her tone ; she addressed Him, not as a Jew, but with the respectful word, "Sir." But she did not yet understand His meaning. Her thought was still on the deep well from which He had nothing to draw what He called "living water."

Though she had begun to respect Him, she contrasted Him with Jacob, her great ancestor, of whom she thought, and of his children and even his cattle as gathering about the well to quench their thirst.

How strange her question to Him sounds to us, "Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" How amazed would she have been, if at that moment Jacob had appeared from heaven and bowing before Him worshipped Him as the Lord of Heaven and earth.

Again He spoke of the water He could give, contrasting it with that in the well. She understood Him better. She did not yet know who He was, but believed He had some great power to help her. And so, as He had said to her, "Give Me to drink"—of the water from the well, she said to Him, "Sir, give me this water"—of which He had spoken.

Then He astonished her by referring to her

wicked life, of which she supposed He, a stranger, could not know. At once she thought of Him, not only as a great Teacher, but as a Prophet of God. She judged that He could tell her which was right, the Jews in claiming Jerusalem as the most holy place in the Holy Land, or the Samaritans in claiming Gerizim. Pointing to the mountain, eight hundred feet above them, she said: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, but ye," meaning the Jews, "say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

He told her that in both Jerusalem and Gerizim and all other places, men could and should worship God. He declared "God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

She thought of Jesus, whom she called the Messiah, not thinking that He sat weary and thirsty before her; and she said: "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come He will tell us all things." With astonishment she heard His reply, "I, that speak unto thee, am He."

The disciples, returning with food for Him, marvelled that He talked with her—a woman, and she a Samaritan. But his thirst and hunger had



Page 112 **CHRIST AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA** *Hofmann*



been forgotten in the joy of His ministry to the poor, ignorant, wicked, despised one who, like a very different woman at a later day, sat at His feet and heard His words.

Unmindful of her errand at the well, leaving there her water-pot, she hastened with joy to the city, with the tidings of Christ. Many obeyed her call, went to the well, heard and believed His words; and besought Him that He would tarry with them. So the hour for rest was prolonged two days. Many listened to His teachings "and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Chapter XIX

Healing of a Nobleman's Son

Cana

Arriving in Galilee, Jesus went to Cana, of which we have pleasing memories because of His first miracle there, which added to the cheer of a wedding feast.

That wonder was doubtless known in Capernaum; and also others which He had wrought in Jerusalem. These latter would be reported by the Galileans who had witnessed or heard of them at the Feast in the Holy City. They would be known in the homes of the poor and the rich and the palace of the Ruler, Herod Antipas.

There was an officer of his court, a nobleman of Capernaum, a Jew of high birth. Perhaps he was Chuza, whose wife Joanna was among the women who were friendly to Jesus and gave Him money and other things He needed. If so this adds interest to the story of the nobleman's family. He had a young and only son who was very sick with fever.

The agonized father, hearing that Jesus was in Cana, went twenty miles across the plain and up the mountain, "and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son ; for he was at the point of death."

It was one o'clock in the afternoon of a short November day. It would take five hours to make the journey. By nightfall the boy might have died. The father thought of Jesus simply as a Healer. We know that Jesus could have raised the boy from the dead. The father did not think of this, or that He could heal his son without going to Him, or that He could do what He pleased anywhere and in any way He chose, because He had the power of God.

Now Jesus wanted the father to understand this ; so He did not immediately tell him that He would help him, though His heart was full of love and pity. He wanted the father to know of a greater blessing than even the healing of the body. It was that which Jesus the Saviour could give to the spirit.

But the agonized father did not yet understand this. He felt that every moment of delay in starting for his home might make it too late for Jesus to be of any help. So he cried out, with

perhaps a little of the tone of the officer which he was, "Sir, come down ere my child die."

Jesus did not say, "I will go." He calmly replied, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." There was a great contrast between the nobleman's word "Come," and Jesus' word "Go."

There was something in the manner and appearance and tone of Jesus that made the father feel that He had a power of which the father had not thought. "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way," without asking Jesus to go with him, or wondering why He did not. Without even hastening home himself, wearied with the anxious journey from Capernaum, joyful in believing that his son was saved from death, night coming on, he stopped for rest. The next morning he continued his journey alone—without Jesus, for whom he had gone to Cana.

But he was not alone all the way. His servants saw him coming. They thought they had good news. They did have good words, but not news to him. They were the very words Jesus had spoken, "Thy son liveth." His face did not lighten up with the surprise they expected the loving father to show; it was not a surprise. He

asked the hour when his son began to amend. He learned that it was the same in which Jesus had spoken the healing word.

What a greeting that father received from the joyful mother and recovering boy. Not only they but all in their house believed that Jesus was not only the wonderful Healer of the bodies of men, but also the Saviour of their souls.

Chapter XX

Rejected at Nazareth

Nazareth

For thirty years Nazareth was the home of Jesus. There His childhood, youth and early manhood had been spent. Leaving it for a season He had returned to it for a short but memorable visit. He was still thought of as Jesus the carpenter, such a man as His brothers James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas.

But the faithful village carpenter had laid aside His tools to use them no more. His work was now of another kind. His Father's business did not require them. He would now teach His townsmen what that business was. He would reveal Himself to them as the expected Messiah.

So on the Sabbath He entered the only synagogue in Nazareth, the one where it had been His custom from boyhood to worship. It was probably built of white marble, ornamented on the outside with rude carvings of vine-leaves and grapes.



There was no minister such as churches now have, but there were several men who generally read the Scriptures and talked to the people about them, but anyone who chose to do so might speak.

There was a keeper of the rolls of the Sacred Scriptures, which were kept in an ark of painted wood, before which hung a curtain of silk. Near it was a raised platform which Jesus ascended. Then the keeper drew aside the curtain, took down the roll containing the writings of Isaiah, and gave it to Him. Jesus unrolled the volume till He found the place He wanted, and began to read. All of the people stood and listened. He read only a few words. They had been written seven hundred years before. They were about the Messiah for whose coming the Jews had been waiting all that time. Then He rolled up the writing, gave it to the keeper, and sat down, as the custom was when one addressed the people. "And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him." The solemn and earnest manner in which He read what the prophet had said long before, made them watch Him carefully and listen attentively. What words of sweetness would He utter? He had never

spoken any other. He had talked with the wisdom of a Rabbi. His were "gracious" words.

"And He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears;" by which He meant that He was the Saviour, Christ, the Lord whom the Angel of the plain said He was. They were astonished at the wonderful declaration. They would not believe Him. They asked, "Is not this the carpenter? What reason has He to call Himself the promised Messiah?" Their eyes now glared with hate. Then there were murmured whispers which grew into angry words. Their respectful manner was changed to rudeness and then to violence. They rose from their seats, dragged Him out of the synagogue "and thrust Him out of the city and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong."

With calmness yet gentle firmness He allowed himself to be led up the hill. He would not recall a word He had said, for it was the truth. He might have proved Himself to be what He claimed by a miracle, striking them with blindness, so that they themselves would need to be led. But He used no such power, while He showed that of another kind. There is strength

in innocence—such was his. There is weakness in wickedness—such was theirs. There was something in His appearance which we cannot fully explain, and which perhaps they did not fully understand, but which filled them with awe and kept them from their purpose. “He, passing through the midst of them, went His way.” “They stood—stopped—inquired—were ashamed—fled—separated.” This is not the only time that He showed such power over His enemies. As He descended that hill He probably had His last look but one at Nazareth—of the home of most of His earthly life; of the synagogue where He had worshipped and had been rejected.

We have called Jesus the Flower of Nazareth. Those who had seen it bud and bloom, rudely tore it from its stem. For a time it retained its beautiful life and fragrance in other parts of the Holy Land, until crushed by other and yet more cruel hands.

Chapter XXI

The Pool of Bethesda

Jerusalem

“After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” Wherever He went and for whatever purpose His eye was always open to the suffering, and His ear to their cry. Not always did He wait for them to call for help. Not always did they know that He could help them. This is true of what happened on His visit to Jerusalem.

In it was a pool called Bethesda, whose waters were believed to have the power of healing the sick. So multitudes of blind and lame and diseased of every kind came to be healed.

Among them was a poor man who had not walked for thirty-eight years. The bounding boy or active girl thinks it a great trial to be lame for only a few days. How pitiful should we be toward those who are always lame, and how thankful if our limbs are strong.



Jesus was pitiful, and He was helpful in a way we cannot be. He saw the lame man lying by the pool unable even to crawl into its waters. With a kind voice He asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The man was not only weak in body, but discouraged in spirit. He had no thought what was in Jesus' mind. But the question was asked in such a tender tone, and the look of Jesus was so full of pity that he told Him of his trouble: there was no one to put him into the pool.

Jesus saith unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." A strange command, but given in such a way that the man tried to obey, and in obeying, the power was given him by Jesus to do as He had commanded.

The Great Healer immediately went away from the curious crowd gathering to see the wonder, before the healed man knew who He was.

"The Jews said to him, It is the Sabbath day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." They had made rules about the Sabbath that God never made, and they blamed the man for not obeying them. He had a good and wise answer: "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk." But they began

to persecute Jesus because He had done such things on the Sabbath day.

Jesus made Himself known to the healed man in the Temple, warning him against sin, which is a greater evil than any sickness of body. He then returned to the Lake of Galilee.

Chapter XXII

Draught of Fishes

Sea of Galilee. Near Capernaum

It had probably been a stormy night during whose long hours the fishermen of Galilee toiled without any reward. At last the morning dawned. They drew their empty boats upon the beach, and commenced mending their nets broken by the dashing waves, and washing from them the sand and pebbles, which had been gathered instead of fishes.

The people, having learned of Jesus from Jerusalem, gathered on the shore to see and hear Him. He entered Simon's boat, which He well knew His disciple would be glad to lend Him, and asked him to thrust it out a little from the land. It would be useful for a pulpit, though it had been useless as a fishing boat.

"Now when He had left speaking He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught." Tired, disappointed, thinking of the tedious hours He had

spent in that boat, "Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing." But that was not all he said. In calling Jesus "Master" he had the spirit of obedience: so he said, "Nevertheless, at Thy word I will let down the net"—the same that had remained empty all night long. It was as if he had said: "I do not see the use of letting it down again; there seems to be no fish here: I might let it down all day as I have all night, and get not a fish for all my trouble. But, my Master, I will do, not as I think and feel, but as You bid me, for I know what You say is right, and I trust You for what may happen."

And a wonderful thing did happen. The net was no longer empty. It was not made for any such multitude of fishes as now ran into it, and it began to break. Now there was so much to be done that Simon and Andrew could not do it alone. James and John were in another boat. Looking toward that of Simon, they saw him and his brother with excited gestures beckoning them to hasten to their help.

When Peter saw what Jesus had done, he had a mixed feeling of awe and reverence for his Master. Casting himself down before Him, he

confessed his sinfulness and unworthiness to be with Him. Yet he had a loving and obedient spirit, and the Master knew it. And knowing it, He had a great plan for him, of which He now told him.

“Jesus said unto Simon, fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.” And then, addressing him and his brother Andrew, and also James and John, He said, “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed Him.”

On the banks of the Jordan they had become His followers, believing in Him as the Messiah and their Saviour, and ready to do what He wanted them to, wherever they were; but they had not yet given up their business of fishing to go about with Jesus and make men His followers, such as they had been.

Let us remember Peter especially and this miracle, for it is to be repeated in his presence, filling him with still greater wonder.

Chapter XXIII

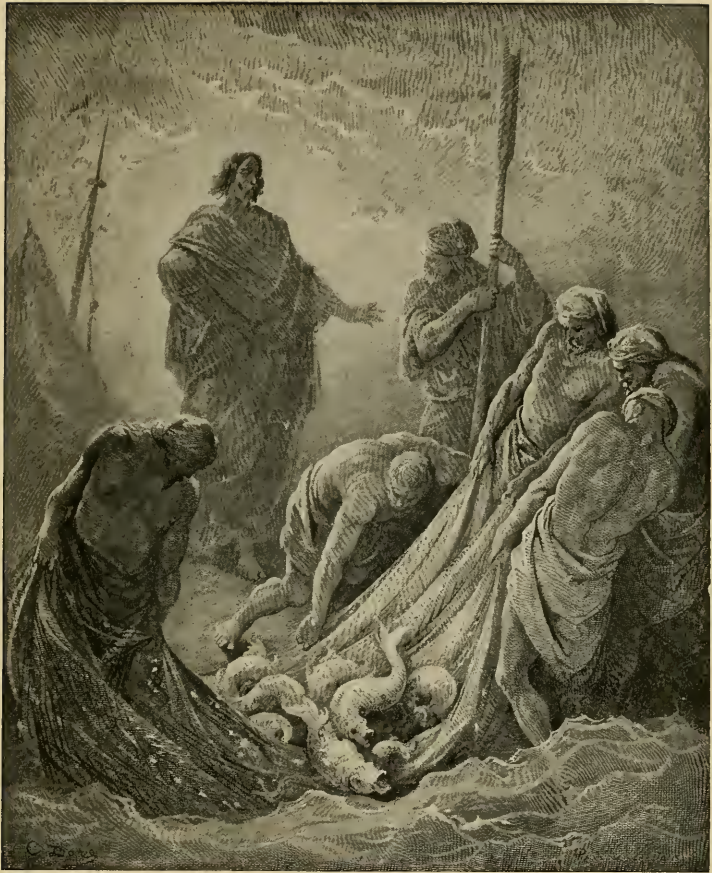
A Sabbath in Capernaum

Capernaum

The Christian traveler of to-day ascends a little hill near the Sea of Galilee, and lingers by the silent marble, sculptured ruins of what he believes formed a part of the synagogue of Capernaum. He recalls a Sabbath Jesus spent in that city and His preaching in that synagogue.

The people had heard of the wonders He had done and were curious to see and hear Him. His doctrine, His teaching, was very different from that of the scribes, the learned men who spake there on the Sabbath days. He told them of the Kingdom of God—what it was, and how they could be of it.

They listened until interrupted by the furious ravings of an insane man who was tormented by Satan in a way we cannot explain. But Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man, and He was obeyed. The people “were aston-





Page 134 CHRIST HEALING THE PALSIED MAN *A. Bida*

ished at His doctrine, for His word was with power." And they were all amazed that He who changed water into wine had also changed the ravings of a madman into quietness and peace.

Leaving the synagogue, Jesus went into the house of Peter and Andrew. Those near friends, James and John, also went with him.

The mother of Peter's wife had a great fever. Perhaps her friends had seen the young son of the Nobleman, full of life, after being at the point of death with the same kind of illness. At any rate they sought Jesus to heal her. He did not do as He did in the case of the boy, simply speak the healing word. He went to her, stood over her, touched her hand, rebuked the fever, took her by the hand, and lifted her up. "And immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them"—doing for them instead of their doing for her.

But His Sabbath day's work was not yet done: it was hardly begun; that of the Teacher was ended, but not that of the Healer. His hand had much more to do.

The wonderful story of the synagogue and of Peter's home, spread throughout the city. Despairing ones began to hope, rightly thinking

that He, who could control disorder of mind and fever of body, could heal sickness of every kind.

And so, as the sun was setting, there were carried from many homes, toward the house of Peter, all that needed the help of the great Healer—the suffering, hoping, expecting ones. They, with their friends, and the curious crowd, wanting to see the wonder-worker, were a great multitude. “All the city was gathered together at the door.” But Jesus made His way to those who needed His help. One sentence tells us the story of all: “He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.” In the stillness of that evening hour, many groans and sighs and sorrows were hushed.

Remember those hands of Jesus. We shall see how, in many ways and places, and at many times, they were used in healing and blessing.

The Sabbath ended. The wearied Teacher and healer sought rest in sleep, but “rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” But He could not long be hidden, even in a solitary place. His “still hour,” alone with his Father, was soon ended. Peter, grateful for the miracle in his



CHRIST THE GREAT HEALER

They . . . brought unto Him all that were diseased.'—Matt. xiv. 35.

house the day before, led the way and many followed, begging "that he should not depart from them." But He said unto them, "I must preach the Kingdom of God in other cities also ; therefore am I sent."

Chapter XXIV

A Leper and a Paralytic Healed

Galilee

Of all diseases in the land where Jesus lived the most dreaded was leprosy. The leper was a great sufferer without any hope of ever being well. Physicians could not help him; medicines could do him no good. No one, not even his friends who loved and pitied him, would touch or go near him, for fear of becoming like him. He must live alone or have other lepers for his only companions. If he wandered along the road where he was not known as a leper, or sat by the wayside unseen, he must utter a warning cry to any one he saw, saying: "Unclean, unclean." His was a most wretched, hopeless life, his disease becoming worse and worse until death ended his misery.

Such a man, in one of the cities of Galilee, went to Jesus, fell upon his face, and kneeling down worshipped Him, beseeching him, saying, "If Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean." Jesus did to him what no Rabbi, doctor, friend or kindred in

all the land would do : He “put forth His hand and touched him,” saying, “I will ; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.”

He told all he met of his wonderful cure. Instead of crying aloud, “Unclean, unclean, away, away from me,” he cried, “I am clean, I am clean, come and see what the Great Physician has done for me.” He began life anew, with all its joys and hopes, instead of continuing in a living death.

Jesus entering Capernaum, it was known that He was in the house of Peter. So many came to Him that there was not room enough to receive them. “There were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem.”

While He was preaching, a man appeared before Him, in a very different way from that in which the leper had approached Him. He had been taken with palsy. His hands and feet refused to move. He was powerless to do anything. But though helpless, he was not hopeless when he heard what Jesus had done for others. Four friends carried him to the house of Peter. The multitude filled the streets near it, and the court-yard, which was surrounded by a covered gallery. Opening from it was a room in which

Jesus probably was. Outside of the house was a stairway, leading to the roof, which, being different from ours, could be easily torn up. There he was carried. Through an opening he was let down on his pallet, or mat-bed, to Jesus.

It was a strange sight to see a man escaping the multitude in this way. It showed his strong belief, and that of his friends, that Christ could and would heal him. The speaking was interrupted. Slowly and silently the man descended to the floor. When it was reached he looked into the face of Jesus, without saying a word. But this was not necessary. Jesus broke the silence. His word was one of tenderness and hope: it was "Son." Then He said, "Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Forgiveness was more to him than healing. Jesus said this, not only to comfort the man, but to reprove and teach some that were there, not to learn but to meanly watch Him, hoping to find something for which they could blame Him. They asked themselves, "Who can forgive sin but God only?" They said nothing aloud, but He "perceived their thoughts." Telling the man to arise, take up his bed and walk, He showed them that because He had the power of God He could both heal and forgive.



Chapter XXV

The Call of Matthew. The Twelve Apostles

Capernaum, Mt. Hattin

There was a man named Matthew, whose business was the gathering of taxes for the Romans, who then ruled the Holy Land. This was very hateful to the Jews. They despised the tax-gatherers who were often dishonest. They especially hated a Jew who was willing to be a tax-gatherer. So Matthew, being a Jew and a tax-gatherer, was despised by his own people.

Doing business on the sea-shore at or near Capernaum, he doubtless had heard Jesus preach, and seen or at least known of His miracles. He was already a friend of Jesus, though he had not made it known to Him. But two words—"Follow Me"—spoken by his new Master, showed him that Jesus knew of his friendship, and loved him. He called him to be a disciple. Matthew obeyed the call. "He left all, rose up and followed Him," to become an Apostle, and the first evangelist to write the story of Christ.

Of Jesus it is said, "It came to pass in those days that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

There is only one hill of any size on the western side of the lake. It has two peaks with a little plain between, and is something in the shape of a saddle. It is called Mount Hattin and known in the region as *the* mountain. It is one of the most sacred spots in the Holy Land. It was probably here that Jesus "continued all night in prayer." We know that before some of the most important events in His life He was "in prayer to God." That night on Mount Hattin was spent in preparation for the following day.

We think of Him alone, or surrounded by wild beasts, as on the mount of Temptation. The stillness might be broken by the hooting of birds and the howling of beasts, but this would not disturb His voice of prayer continued until the bright moon and stars, which looked down upon Him through the clear sky, became dim in the morning light that streamed over the mountains of the eastern shore.

It was early when a company of disciples broke upon His solitude. He welcomed them, and solemnly set apart twelve "that they should

be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power" to do miracles in His name. They were to leave their homes, and go about doing good with Him. They were to be taught by Him, that they might be prepared to teach others while He lived, and especially after He had returned to heaven.

Jesus chose *Peter*, a bold, earnest, warm-hearted man ; and *Andrew* his brother ; *John*, the most loving, lovable and beloved of all ; and *James* his brother ; *Philip*, young and thoughtful, of Bethsaida ; *Bartholomew*, also called Nathanael, a wise and good man from Cana ; *Matthew*, once the despised tax-gatherer of Capernaum, who like John was to write of what his Master said and did. Of these seven we have heard before. But five more were chosen—*Thomas*, a thoughtful man who rejoiced in Jesus as his Lord and his God ; the two brothers *James the Less*, and *Jude* ; *Simon* ; and last *Judas*, to be known as the Betrayer of Jesus.

They were a company of young men. Five of them, perhaps eight, were fishermen. All were from Galilee except Judas, who came from near Jerusalem, where lived priests and Pharisees, to whom he betrayed the Master who chose him

to be one of the twelve, to whom Jesus gave the name of *Apostles*.

They were not what men called great, nor learned, nor rich, nor powerful; but they were greater and wiser than the rulers and Rabbis of their nation. While Jesus remained on the earth, He kept them with Him, explaining the things pertaining to His kingdom, and preparing them to make known His gospel among men, and build up His Church. This "glorious company of the apostles" formed a circle of twelve about the Master. From them He chose an inner circle of three for a closer friendship than even with the others; they were Peter, James and John. Two of these, Peter and John, were still more nearly related to Him. But of the twelve, the three, the two, the blessed *one* was John the Beloved Disciple.



Chapter XXVI

The Sermon on the Mount

Near Capernaum

While Jesus was with His disciples, who, we may suppose, were on one of the peaks of Mount Hattin, a multitude was gathering from every direction—

“Across the sea, along the shore,
In numbers ever more and more,
From lowly hut and busy town,
The valley through, the mountain down.”

Jesus and the Twelve saw them coming. “And He came down and stood in the plain.” Those who needed healing crowded around Him in such numbers that He could not give them separate attention; so “the whole multitude sought to touch Him,” and they were healed.

But He had a more important and solemn service to perform. He saw in that vast throng something worse than disease. They had wrong thoughts of their own sins, and of Him as the King of the Kingdom of Heaven.

They believed false stories concerning the expected King of the Jews ; that he would stand on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea and command it to wash ashore pearls and other treasures at their feet ; that he would clothe them in rich garments of scarlet and adorn them with jewels ; that he would feed them with manna sweeter than that with which their forefathers had been fed in the wilderness.

They believed and trusted the wisdom of the Rabbis, which was not real wisdom, for they taught much which the Scriptures did not contain. They thought goodness was *doing* certain things rather than having right feelings.

So in that hour, when the ministry of healing was over, Jesus began the ministry of teaching. He delivered the wonderful discourse called "The Sermon on the Mount." It is probable that it was after bowing His head in prayer that "He lifted up His eyes," and then "opened His mouth and taught."

His first word was not to blame their ignorance nor reprove their sins. It was "Blessed," with which He began eight sayings so beautiful and telling of so much happiness that they are called the "Beatitudes"; and the hill where

Jesus uttered them is called "The Mount of Beatitudes."

In this sermon the Great Preacher taught the people about many things. They can be arranged in three classes :

1. He taught them what to be—humble, merciful, just, and perfect like God.

2. He taught them what not to be—angry, or hateful, or speakers of evil words.

3. He taught them what to do—to repent, to love, to pray, and to trust God.

Jesus gave one rule that includes all rules of duty to one another ; it was this : "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." This is called "The Golden Rule." It is the Golden Text for every one.

His great law was about Love—to God and to one another. Remember that if we obey God's law about Love we will obey all His laws.

The Sermon on the Mount had a solemn ending, telling of the happiness and safety of those who obey the words which Jesus spoke, and of the terrible sorrow that must come upon those who will not hear and obey Him.

Chapter XXVII

Healing of the Centurion's Servant

Capernaum

Jesus came down from the Mount of Beatitudes leading the multitudes into the plain below. So constantly were they with Him and so eager to hear His words that He and His disciples "could not so much as eat bread." Might they not be reminded of His words to them at the well of Sychar, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of?"—meaning the Spirit of God in Him, strengthening Him even in weariness of body.

But while doing for the many He was suddenly interrupted to do for one. There lived near Capernaum a Centurion or Captain of soldiers who were kept there to make the Jews obey the laws of Rome, which then governed the Holy Land. Though he was called a heathen, and was an officer of a nation worshipping idols, he had learned to reverence the God of the Jews. For them he had built a synagogue in Capernaum, so much more costly and beautiful than any other

there, that it was called *the* synagogue. The ruins of it, which may be seen to-day, show how generous was his gift. He was a favorite with the Jews because of his goodness, and of what he had done for them.

A boy servant of the Centurion "who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him the elders of the Jews, beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant." They willingly went to Jesus, telling Him "he was worthy for whom He should do this."

But after they had started, the Centurion who had doubtless heard how Jesus had healed the Nobleman's son without seeing him, only speaking the word of power, thought He could do the same for the dying servant.

And he had another thought. Though the Jewish elders called him good and "worthy," he felt that he was unworthy to have one so good as Jesus come into his house. So he sent other messengers to Jesus with words like these: "I am an officer. I give commands to my soldiers and they obey me—doing or not doing as I bid them. As I have authority over them, You have authority over disease. It will obey You as my

soldiers obey me. As I speak the word of command, so can You 'speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.' "

Jesus was greatly pleased with this message from the Centurion. Before answering the messengers He turned Him about to the people that followed Him. He showed them how the Centurion was better—more worthy—than even the Jewish elders claimed him to be. He said more than that—that the Centurion was better than themselves, because he believed in Him.

Then He sent back this message to the Centurion—"As thou hast believed, so be it unto thee."

"And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour."



Chapter XXVIII

Raising of the Widow's Son

Nain

We know of at least three persons whom Jesus raised from the dead when He was on the earth. The first was an only son ; the second an only daughter ; the third an only brother.

There was a young man who has been known for two thousand years as the only son of his mother and she a widow. These words, "only son" and "widow," describe a home already saddened, yet having a remaining joy. Her husband having died, her heart clung all the more to the young son who was left, to be, as she hoped, her companion in loneliness, comfort in sorrow, help in the feebleness of age, but he died.

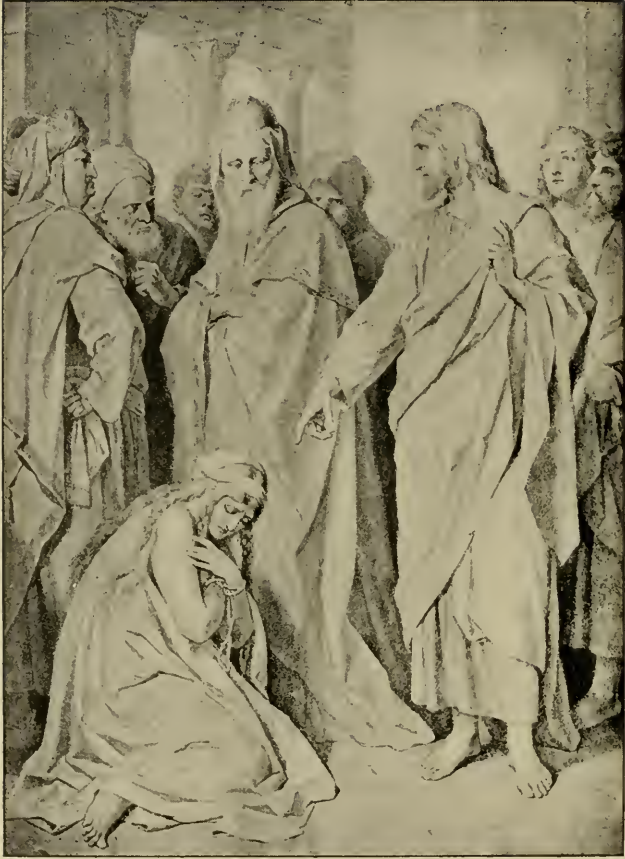
She lived in a village on the slope of a mountain, from which she could look upon Mount Tabor and other beautiful heights. The fitting name of the village was Nain, which means "fair," but it was no longer such to her, for the fairest thing it contained was gone.

In her home, no longer what it had been, she sat upon the floor, as was the custom when a relative had died, moaning and lamenting. She ate no meat and drank no wine. Her simple meals were taken in the homes of kind neighbors.

While she was thus silent and lonely there was a very different scene on the shore of the Lake of Galilee. It is not likely that she had heard of what had happened there the day before—how the Great Healer had restored the Centurion's servant to health when he had been ready to die. If she did know of it, she might not think He could restore to life one already dead.

In the morning of the funeral day, or possibly the evening before, Jesus left Capernaum for Nain, twenty-five miles away. Going down the lake in a boat or walking along the shore to the Jordan valley, then turning westward, passing the foot of Tabor, green with its covering of oak and terebinth trees, He approached the village of Nain. He was not alone. "Many of His disciples and much people went with Him."

Had we stood, toward the evening of that day, in the narrow, steep, rocky road leading from the plain to the village, we would have beheld contrasted scenes.



There were two processions—one coming down, the other coming up the hill; one in sadness, the other in gladness; one full of thought and pity for the widowed mother, the other rejoicing in the Teacher and Healer. One was on its way to the burying-ground on the hill-side, ten minutes' walk from the road, where processions go to-day as they did at that evening hour; the other was on its way to be with and to hear Him whom they had followed from the morning hour.

The downward procession was led by two men, blowing flutes, whose doleful sounds reminded all who heard, of death. Following them were women, hired mourners, tossing their arms over their heads, and then making mournful sounds on their tinkling cymbals, and chanting in a low, sad voice, saying, "Alas, alas." Then followed perhaps the funeral orator, praising the good deeds of the dead. Then came the weeping mother, with her upper garments rent to show her broken spirit. Behind her was the bier, an open willow basket, containing "the only son of his mother."

There were four pall-bearers who carried it for a short distance, then paused, and with loud lamentations gave it to other four who carried it onward.

There was a beautiful custom that when a dead body was carried, all persons who met it would pause and let it pass ; or, if sitting, would rise and stand while it was passing. So when the joyful procession led by Jesus met the mournful one from Nain, it paused in respectful silence. The tender thought of both was toward the weeping mother. "And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her." He Himself was a son, and knew how His mother would feel when He would be taken from her.

A part of the funeral service in that land, showing sympathy for the bereaved, was in these words : "Weep with them, all ye who are bitter of heart." How strange then must the words of Jesus have sounded to the sorrowing mother : "Weep not." But his tone and manner must have shown that "He had compassion on her." And then His action spoke louder than His words : it was a single, slight act. "He came and touched the bier" of the dead son. In awe and wonder "they that bore him stood still," though Jesus had given no spoken command to them. But He *did* to him whom they carried : "Young man, I say unto thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak."



RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON FROM THE DEAD.
'He that was dead sat up, and began to speak.'—Luke vii. 15.

What was the first exclamation of those unsealed and astonished lips? Was it "My Lord," or "My Mother"? Would that some photograph had preserved the loving look, and some phonograph the words of Jesus as He delivered him to his mother.

As the widow had gone before her only son in deepest sorrow towards the grave which was to remain empty, he led her back to their home, where they rejoiced together, having gratefully joined in the cry of the people from Capernaum and those of their own village as "they glorified God."

Chapter XXIX

Pentitent Woman Forgiveness

Capernaum ?

The next scene in which we see Jesus was of a different kind, but of the deepest interest to us. It is not quite certain where it was, but probably in Capernaum. He had been preaching. Almost the last words we have of His address are these: —“Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Among His hearers was a woman of whom we know as “a sinner,” who had been guilty of great wrong, by which she was known, and for which she was despised. As her sin was great, her trouble was great; she had no hope of happiness, but dread of misery as long as she lived.

The words of Jesus, “Come unto Me,” were very strange to her. No one had spoken thus in her hearing. She believed them: she loved Him. She longed to “come” where she would hear more of His words, show her affection for Him, and find rest, which He only could give.



She wanted to come to Him in both body and spirit. To do this she found a way.

There was a Pharisee by the name of Simon who invited Jesus to his house. He was very different from the woman in his thoughts about Jesus, and in his feelings toward Him. It is not quite certain why he invited Him. Perhaps it was from curiosity to see the One about whom such wonderful stories were being told ; perhaps to get honor to himself for entertaining the distinguished Teacher ; perhaps to find out whether He was wiser than the Rabbis, and was a prophet. But whatever the reason for inviting Jesus to his house he did not treat Him as a guest, in a proper manner. He did not, as was the custom, give Him water for His dusty feet, the kiss of welcome on His cheek, and perfume for His head.

“The Pharisee desired Him that He would eat with him.” There were couches around the table, on which all reclined, the body resting on the left elbow and the feet outward from the table.

To Simon’s house the woman came uninvited and unwelcomed. Yet he did not turn her away. She brought with her “an alabaster box of ointment,” or a little vase of spikenard which she

wore upon her neck for an ornament and a perfume.

Though entering without an invitation from Simon, she was accepting the invitation of Jesus, which could be done in Simon's house or anywhere else—"Come unto Me." In shame she stood timidly at his feet, contrasting her sinfulness with His purity, yet sorrowing for her sins and purposing to sin no more; full of love for Him.

The simple record tells us "She stood behind Him weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment." These six things are a picture in our minds such as painter never put on canvas. She in her shame, Jesus in His love, and Simon in his contempt, were all silent as she continued standing, weeping, washing, wiping, kissing, anointing. Yet all were thinking. Simon was busy in thought, saying to himself that if Jesus were a prophet He would know what kind of a woman He allowed to do these things.

Jesus was the first to break the silence, by speaking to Simon, showing Himself to be a prophet by being able to read his unspoken thoughts. He contrasted the unfriendly manner



THE WOMAN WITH THE ALABASTER BOX OF
OINTMENT.

'Her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much.'
—Luke vii. 47.

in which Simon had treated Him, though his guest, and the loving manner in which the woman had treated Him.

Before He spake to her, she was made glad by what she heard Him say to Simon about the forgiveness of her many sins, and doubly happy when He said unto her, "Thy sins are forgiven."

"She sat and wept, and with her untressed hair,
Still wiped the feet she was so blessed to touch ;
And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she loved so much."

Chapter XXX

Christ Stilling the Tempest

Sea of Galilee

It was a spring morning when anemone, tulip and narcissus gave beauty to the plain of Galilee, and blossoms of the trees gave fragrance to the air, that Jesus "called His twelve disciples together," and sat upon the sea shore. But they could not long be alone, for the multitudes followed them and again He entered His pulpit-boat, and He spake unto them in Parables; by which we mean something taken from nature to illustrate truth.

In the evening the people, not satisfied with all they had heard in the morning, gathered again. But Jesus thought it best for them not to hear more that day. Besides He was very tired and needed immediate rest. So, without even stopping for food, He said to His disciples, "Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And when He was entered into a ship His disciples followed Him." It is called by one of the Evan-



gests "*the ship*," which Jesus used for a pulpit, a resting-place, and journeying. "And they launched forth. And there were also with Him other little ships. But, as they sailed, He fell asleep. He was in the hinder part of the ship asleep on a pillow."

As He is lying there, we think of Him as a man, like any other, weary and exhausted, because of the labors of the day, and needing rest. His was the sweet sleep that follows honest toil. No troubled conscience disturbed His calm repose on the calm waters. But the calmness of both was soon broken.

We have noticed the steep mountains on the eastern shore between which are deep ravines. Through them fierce and cold winds from the snowy Hermon often come down upon the smooth waters, which are suddenly changed into billowy waves. So was it when Christ was in the ship.

Weaving together the description given by three Evangelists, we can imagine something of the danger to Him, and the disciples, and those in the little ships that tried to follow Him. "There arose a great storm of wind. And there came down a storm of wind on the lake. And behold there arose a great tempest in the sea.

And the waves beat into the ship. And the ship was covered with the waves. It was now filling. They were in jeopardy. But He was asleep."

Undisturbed by the dashing of the waves over Him He slept, as peacefully as ever He did in the arms of Mary. Rocked in the boat by the storm, He slumbered as quietly as an infant in its cradle, guarded by its mother's tender care.

Meanwhile the gathering clouds made darker the approaching night. The Twelve in fear looked into the filling boat, out upon the boistrous sea, upward to the blackening sky, and down upon their peaceful Lord, whose appearance was a contrast to all above and around them.

In the howling tempest we can just distinguish the agonizing cry of one and another, saying, "Lord, save us ; we perish. Master, carest Thou not that we perish? Master, Master, we perish." One thought, one word is common to them all—"perish"—all together, Master and disciples ; life's work suddenly ended ; Jesus no longer the Preacher, Healer and expected King ; the Twelve no longer to be with Him in a blessed ministry to men's bodies and souls ; all earthly hopes and plans buried in the depths of the sea.

The Master's opening eyes discovered at once

their fears. His opening ears caught their half-reproving words. But He awoke with calmness as from a night's repose, unruffled by the sudden awakening, or by the tempest, or by the despairing cry of His disciples.

St. Matthew, who was one of them, tells of the gentle reproof they received, seemingly before He arose from His pillow, saying, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Jesus would calm their fears before He would the storm. "Then," says Matthew, "He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." His lordly command, "Peace, be still," was obeyed.

Meanwhile those in the little boats that accompanied Him, who were ever ready to follow Him on land or sea, must have been astonished and gladdened when suddenly the storm ended; when its darkness fled and the stars looked peacefully down on Him who commanded "Peace," they rejoiced with exceeding joy. So did the Magi at sight of the star of Bethlehem looking down upon this same Jesus, then called Lord, and now proving Himself to be Lord of the sea.

And so they in the little boats were ready to join the Twelve in exclaiming, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Chapter XXXI

Raising of Jairus' Daughter

Capernaum

The next day after the storm Jesus returned from the eastern shore of the lake to the western, where many were gathered to see Him and His disciples. Had they wondered why the night-tempest had ceased so suddenly? They may have learned from those in the little boats coming at an earlier hour; and so were ready to see the Ruler of the storm.

On the same day, Matthew gave a farewell feast in honor of his new Master, before leaving his home and friends to follow Jesus wherever He went. The conversation at the table was about most solemn and important truths; it would have been continued longer but for a sudden interruption.

There lived in Capernaum a ruler of the synagogue, who was probably one of "the elders of the Jews," who besought Jesus that He would heal a Centurion's servant who was "ready to die."



His name was Jairus. He had an only daughter, tenderly loved, the flower of the family, the light of the home. Perhaps she was called by her parents their little lamb, or pet lamb, by which name she was called by another, as we shall see.

She was twelve years o.d, and so passing from childhood into youth. But on the day Jesus returned to Capernaum she was rapidly passing from life. Her father hastened to the feast where Jesus was, "fell down at His feet, worshipped Him and besought Him, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death. I pray Thee, Come and lay Thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." Jesus at once ended His sayings, rose from the table, started with Jairus for his home with a multitude thronging about Him.

On the way a poor woman, who had been sick as many years as Jairus' daughter had lived, forced her way through the crowd, touched the hem of His garment, and was healed. He stopped and spoke kind words to her. This short delay must have seemed long to the anxious father, fearing his daughter might not live until he and the Great Physician could reach his home. And so it was.

A messenger met the Ruler, saying to him privately, "Thy daughter is dead : trouble not the Master ;" as if to say, it is all over—too late ; too late. The Master need go no farther. Not so, thought Jairus, who must have felt grieved at the messenger's heartless question, "Why troublest thou the Master any further?"

The Lord had overheard the words not intended for His ears. He knew that Jairus was "further troubled" because of the message from his home. He saw the father's fear that it was too late for Him to be of any help. So turning to the Ruler, He said, "Fear not : believe only, and she shall be made whole." And so, with the quickened step of gladness instead of the hurried one of sorrow, he led the Great Physician to his home.

It was the hour of mourning according to customs which seem strange to us. There were hired mourners—minstrels and flute-players ; men with torn garments and women with loosened hair, and dust upon their heads, beating their breasts, and rocking their bodies to and fro, weeping and mourning, pretending to be in great sorrow because the little girl had died, and to have sympathy for the mother whose sorrow was great and real.

These false mourners Jesus found in the first room He entered. He was troubled when He saw "the tumult and them that wailed greatly." Displeased with their unreal and hired sorrow, and knowing that soon there would be no cause for sorrow of any kind, because of what He Himself would do, "He saith unto them, Why make ye this ado and weep? The damsel is not dead but sleepeth."

Then they suddenly changed their shrieks of grief into ringing laughter at Him. So He put them out of the house He had come to bless. Entering the death-chamber "He suffered no man to go in, save Peter and James and John and the father and the mother of the maiden." This was one of the three times when the three favored Apostles accompanied Him, becoming special witnesses of His power, glory and sufferings.

Had not the believing father repeated to the fearing yet hoping mother the words spoken in the way, "Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole." And did she not then cease her sobbing, and with womanly confidence whisper to the Master, "I believe."

He had silenced the tumult without and thus

secured solemn silence within. He purposed that the first vision her opening eyes beheld should not be of unfeeling strangers, but only of the six who surrounded her bed in truest friendship and warmest affection. He planned that the first thrill of feeling should be started by the pressure of His own hand. He purposed that the first sound in her opening ear should not frighten her with mournful and discordant mockery, but be that of His own calm and soothing voice. And so "He took the damsel by the hand and said unto her, 'Talitha cumi.'" These words are of special interest to us, because we know that they are what He uttered, and not changed to words of our own language. But we are more interested in the meaning of the words "Talitha cumi." It is this—"My little Lamb, My pet Lamb; rise up." How pleasantly they must have sounded in that home, where the pet name may have been used through twelve years of childhood.

When He had spoken, "her spirit came again, and she arose immediately and walked." Once more she was a living, acting girl, commencing life anew. As such Jesus looked upon her. Thoughtful of her bodily needs, He "commanded

that something be given her to eat." How quickly did the parents obey that almost needless command, and do whatsoever else they could for her comfort and returning strength. How thoughtful would they and she be of Him during all the rest of their lives.

As she remembered how He had bid her to "arise," she would think of Him as the Great Physician ; and when she thought of herself as the "Little Lamb" He had raised from the dead and commanded to be fed, she would think of Him as the Good Shepherd.

We may wonder whether Peter recalled this scene when the Master gave him at another time, near the same spot, a command with a different meaning—"Feed My Lambs."

Chapter XXXII

Second Visit to Nazareth. Mission of the Twelve

Galilee

There were many people in Capernaum who gladly listened to the teachings of Christ, believing and obeying them. There were others who were grateful for what He had done for them, or their friends whom He had healed of their sickness. There were others who were called "sinners" and despised by the Pharisees, who condemned Jesus because He ate with them at Matthew's feast. They hated Him the more He said and did; and the more power He showed over men and things, the more they opposed Him.

The raising of the daughter of Jairus from death seems to have been His last act before leaving Capernaum. It was no longer to be "His own city," though He afterwards taught in towns around it. From that day He was to be a wanderer; yet going about doing good. Once rejected at Nazareth and now at Capernaum, He

said of Himself, "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

But He made one more visit to Nazareth in "His own country," and once more stood in the synagogue from which he had been rudely driven. Since that hour He had said and done much to prove that He was the Messiah He had there claimed to be. But the feeling of the Nazarenes toward Him was unchanged; they still asked, "Is not this the carpenter?" So He turned away again from the home of His childhood and youth and early manhood.

The Great Teacher and Healer had compassion not only on the people who had seen and heard and rejected Him, but also on those in the many towns which He could not visit. So He sent the Twelve, two and two, as teachers and healers in His stead. He gave them power and authority to heal all manner of diseases. "And as ye go," said He, "preach, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." This is what John the Baptist had said before Jesus commenced His ministry.

Chapter XXXIII

Death of John the Baptist

Peraea

When Jesus commenced His ministry, John the Baptist said of Him, "He must increase, but I must decrease." This showed John's humility and faithfulness to his Lord. He was not jealous. He said it was his "joy" to have the many go to the new Teacher, though fewer came to him.

But the enemies of Jesus in Jerusalem hated John because he claimed that Jesus was their Messiah and King. Besides, John's preaching displeased those whom he reproved for their sins. This was especially true of the King Herod Antipas and his Queen Herodias. Because of faithful warnings against their sins, he was cast into prison. Still the King feared and respected him. But Herodias, unwomanly and unqueenly, bold in her badness, was not satisfied with John's imprisonment only; her revengeful spirit demanded that he should be slain.

John was a prisoner in the Castle Machærus,



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CHRIST HEALING THE SICK

C. Schönherr

also called the Black Castle, on the south shore of the Dead Sea—fitting names for the place of blackest crime and most cruel death. It is described as a gloomy castle, a fortress from which no captive could hope to escape. The traveler of to-day gets some idea of its horror as he walks among its ruins and looks down into a deep, hot dungeon, and remembers that for ten long months it was John's only abode.

Within its narrow walls he sat, and stood, and lay, instead of freely roaming about the neighboring wilderness, where so much of his life had been spent. His voice, with which he had cried aloud on the banks of the Jordan to the multitude, was silent or echoed from his prison walls only into his own ear.

The occasional visits of his friends, which the cruel King did not quite dare to deny, left him the more lonely as he thought of the outer world, of life, and labor, and pleasure, which were denied to him. His inhuman keepers, as he found in the end, were more to be dreaded than the wild beasts of his wilderness home.

Meanwhile his thoughts were of Jesus, who was far away on the plains and mountains and waters of beautiful Galilee, surrounded by multi-

tudes, such as had thronged about him on the banks of the Jordan. John, in his trouble, sent some of his disciples to Jesus, Who sent back a message about the work He was doing, especially the miracles of healing and the preaching of the Gospel to the poor; and how blessed John and all others would be even in sorrow and persecution if they trusted in him. He wanted John to still think of Him as the promised Messiah, Son of God, on Whom he had seen the Spirit descending when He was baptized by him. Then He declared that among men there had not been a greater man than John the Baptist. He was indeed great, though in prison, despised for his goodness and persecuted for his faithfulness. How much greater was he in his dungeon than King Antipas and Queen Herodias in their magnificent palace—the one damp and dark, chilly and cheerless; the other brilliant with the light gleaming on its gilded ceilings and colored marble floors.

Weeks had passed since John's disciples had brought the comforting message from Jesus. This had cheered his desponding spirit, and prepared him for whatever might happen.

It was early spring, but green and fragrance

brought no cheer to his dungeon. From it he could hear the merry voices in the adjoining palace, where a grand banquet was being held on the King's birthday. For a while he might listen to the lively music of psaltery, harp, pipe, cymbal, viol, flute and drum, that stole through his gloomy windows. But as the wine flowed freely in the banqueting-hall, the music was drowned in the shouts of revelry.

Then came the dancing girls to make sport for the half-drunken lords and officers to whom the banquet was given. At last they made way for one, the Princess Salome, only child of Herodias, the wicked daughter of the more wicked mother. It was a degrading dance, but pleasing to the guests, and especially to the King. While they praised her, he with a foolish oath promised her whatever reward she might demand. Hurrying to her mother, she said, "What shall I ask?" She received the awful answer, "The head of John the Baptist." "And the king was sorry; nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent and beheaded John in prison. And his head was brought in a charger and given to the damsel, and she brought it to her mother."

And so King, Queen and Princess joined in the murder of him whom Jesus declared the greatest of men. Pitiable King, foolish in his oath, wicked in keeping it, more afraid of displeasing weak and drunken guests and more wicked wife than of the Holy and Almighty God. What a mother in commanding, and what a daughter in obeying—both asking and accepting the head of a holy man as a reward for an unholy deed.

How much of tenderness, sorrow and sympathy are found in the simple record concerning John's disciples; "They came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus."



Chapter XXXIV

Seeking Rest

The Plain of Butaiha

There were two towns by the name of Bethsaida, meaning Fisher-town. One was on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee; the other on the north-east coast, near where the Jordan enters the lake. The latter town was called Bethsaida-Julias. By boat it was six miles from Capernaum, but less distance by land. South of it was a narrow uninhabited plain called Butaiha, with "much grass" and many flowers, and from which rose green hills—a pleasing contrast to the lake and plain. The heart of Jesus must have been sorely grieved at the death of John the Baptist, his kinsman, the faithful preacher, who had proclaimed Him as the expected Messiah, and exhorted men to prepare to enter His Kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus knew that the enemies of John were His enemies, who would gladly end His life also. It is not strange that He looked for a season of solitude. Besides,

He was weary with constant and exhausting labors ; and so were His disciples, who returned to Him from the preaching tours on which He had sent them, at the same time that John's disciples came to Him with the sad story of the Baptist's death. The Twelve had excited so much interest that many people accompanied them to see Jesus, whose wonderful deeds had made them believe that He would become their King.

Because of His own condition, and of the weariness and excitement of His disciples, He said unto them : " Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." So they quickly entered a boat and steered for the plain, from which to ascend to the calm retreat of a hill, where they might be alone and refreshed by the mountain air that came down from the snowy heights of Hermon which towered above them.

But their departure from Capernaum could not be hidden. Many " ran afoot " around the northern end of the lake. To these were added others from the villages through which they passed, and perhaps Passover-pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. There were five thousand men ; and besides them, uncounted women, as eager to see and hear ; and children, full of won-

der and excitement, keeping hurried pace with their elders.

There were two contrasted scenes : one, of the Master and His disciples at rest on the overlooking height ; and the other, of a gathering host on the plain below. With that other in view, Jesus could no longer rest. As He saw them moving about, wandering without any guide, seeking Him, He "was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd." In tender love and pity He went down to them, and "spake of the Kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing." Thus on the plain did He prove Himself to be what He called Himself in Jerusalem—"The Good Shepherd."

Chapter XXXV

Five Thousand Guests

Plain of Butaiha

Hour after hour passed as the wearied but charmed throng listened to the voice of the Teacher and rejoiced in the works of the Healer. The sun had long passed over the lake and Mount Tabor, and was declining over the Mediterranean. The Twelve, mindful of the weariness of the multitude, their faintness from hunger, and the inconveniences and dangers of approaching night, so far from their homes, bid the Master "send them away." Their special plea was this: "They have nothing to eat."

His compassion was greater than their anxiety, and His wisdom in planning greater than theirs. With astonishment they heard His reply, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat"—a command which seemed strange and impossible for them to obey. Turning to Philip, He asked, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" The bewildered disciple reminded Him

that all the money their common purse contained—which would be about thirty-five dollars of United States money—would not buy food for so many.

“He Himself knew what He would do.” Though He did not reveal His purpose to the Twelve, they must have thought that He had one, for they seemed to have had a conversation about it.

We would suppose that some of them, having seen how the wine at Cana had been supplied for the pleasure of the feast, would think that the same power could supply the necessary food on the plain.

Calmly the Master asks another question, “How many loaves have ye? go and see.” Where should they go? To whom? John is the only one of the four Evangelists recording the story, who gives us a hint of the answer. It is of special interest. As Jesus “Himself knew what He would do,” He knew through whom He would do it. John preserves a remark of Andrew: “There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes.” There is authority for calling him *the* lad. And who was he? Probably an attendant of Jesus and the Twelve, carrying their provisions and rendering such service as a boy could do.

So, when some of the disciples said to Jesus, "We have here but five loaves and two fishes," we may imagine they meant their own supply, carried by the attendant lad. It was just like John, the apostle of childhood, to remember the boy and write of him in his old age.

Jesus gave a second command, more easily understood and more easily obeyed than when He said, "Give ye them to eat." He bade the Twelve "make the men sit down." We gain a hint of the orderly manner in which we believe Christ did everything, in His instruction to have the multitude "sit down by fifties in a company." St. John tells us that there was much grass in the place. St. Mark tells of the green grass and of the "ranks by hundreds and by fifties." Their appearance has been compared to the flower beds of a well cultivated garden. The red, blue and yellow colors of the garments worn by the poorest people were those of the gayest flowers.

The loaves were barley, such as the poorest ate, and which we suppose was the daily food of Jesus and His disciples. The "small fishes" were dried, and like sardines, eaten with bread. With what interest the lad must have taken his small store from his basket and handed it to Jesus,



watching His five movements, as did the disciples and the multitude. "He *took* the five loaves and the two fishes, and *looking up* to Heaven, He *blessed* them," doubtless using these words: "Blessed art Thou, Jehovah and God, King of the world, Who causeth to come forth bread from the earth." "He *broke*, and *gave* the loaves to His disciples." While so doing they failed not but increased. As each disciple gave to each of the multitude, the miracle was repeated. "And the two fishes divided He among them. And they did all eat and were filled." Five thousand men, besides women and children, sitting or standing apart from them, were satisfied; and twelve baskets full were gathered of what remained. The astonished multitude exclaimed, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

There is an old story that the lad who is claimed to be the attendant of Jesus, was the child whom He set in the midst of His disciples when teaching them of humility. There is another story that after Jesus' death, the lad was trained by John for the ministry, and became Bishop of Antioch, and was called Theophorus, which means "One who carries Christ in his heart."

Chapter XXXVI

Walking on the Sea

The Sea of Galilee

The miracle of the loaves and fishes made a wonderful impression on those who witnessed it. They were ready to believe that Jesus was the expected Messiah and King, who would do wonders and give them earthly blessings. The miracle was one of the kind they had been taught to believe the coming King would perform. And so they were ready to crown Jesus at once, and return to their homes in a triumphal procession with Him as its head. That day He received His highest honors on earth from men. He was much grieved that they so misunderstood Him and what was meant by His Kingdom, which was not earthly, but in the hearts of men. He had also reason to fear that if He allowed Himself to be called a King such as the people wanted Him to become, He would be put to death for rebellion against the Roman Government.

The people were not sure that He was will-

ing to be crowned then and there, and so were planning to compel Him to do as they desired. "When Jesus, therefore, perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a King," He planned to defeat their purpose. Even His disciples felt as the mistaken multitude did. They hoped that the hour had come in which their Lord would be an earthly King, and themselves in honor and power with Him. So He instructed them to leave the crowd, enter their boat, and return across the lake to the western Bethsaida, while He tarried on the eastern shore. Surprised and disappointed, they were unwilling to go until He urged their departure. After they had gone, He "sent the multitude away," refreshed by what He had done for their bodies, but, like the Twelve, disappointed in their hopes and plans concerning Him.

Then "He went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone." A few hours before, He with His disciples had looked down upon the gathering throng; and now He saw them dispersing, some going afoot around the northern shore, and others following the Twelve in their boats. In the silence of the mountain He spent the hours of the

night alone with His Father. Once before He had done the same, when He chose and attached to Himself the little company whom He had just sent from Him, yet of whom He was mindful in His solitude.

The cruel murder of His faithful forerunner, John the Baptist, was a reminder of His approaching and more cruel death. The mistaken zeal for Him that day on the plain gave Him no joy, but sadness only.

Meanwhile a storm was gathering about Him, coming from the lake which His disciples were vainly attempting to cross. "The wind was contrary unto them," driving them out into the lake and out of their course. During the night they journeyed but three of the six miles to Capernaum. In those fearful hours did they not remember the former time when their Lord was with them, and heard their cry, "Lord, save us: we perish"? Did they wonder why He "constrained" them to depart from the eastern shore; thus exposing them to the dangers of the mighty storm? They had gone to the plain for rest, which they had not found because of the multitudes that followed them: they were poorly prepared for the labors and anxieties of that



PETER WALKING TO JESUS ON THE WATER

'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' Matt. xiv. 31.

dreadful night. Oh, for the Master! Would that He could come to them! They little thought that His eyes were even then upon them, watching their struggle with the waves, having compassion on them as He had on the shepherdless and hungry people of the plain. "The ship was in the midst of the sea, and He alone on the land. And He saw them toiling in rowing." This was sometime between three and six o'clock in the morning. But He not only "saw:" He "went unto them, walking on the sea." To Him the Psalmist's words could be repeated, "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters." What Job said of God in a figure, was the truth concerning Jesus: "He treadeth upon the waves of the sea." He made stepping stones of the waves that tossed the foundering bark of His disciples. Their discovery of Him only increased their troubles. Mistaking His form for that of a spirit gliding over the waters, "they cried out for fear." No sooner did He catch their despairing cry, than they heard His calm, soothing, familiar voice saying, "It is I." With his presence there was safety. But He added those words which He so often used to His troubled friends— "Be not afraid." His exhortation was immediately obeyed,

even though it had to pierce the howling of the winds to reach them.

Peter's sudden change from fear to joy, his impulsive nature, and deep love for His Master whom he could not wait to receive into the ship, made him cry out, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee on the water." The Master spoke one word, "Come," and Peter "walked on the water, to go to Jesus." For a few moments he boldly trod the waves, with his eyes on Jesus, careless of the tempest. But, turning them away from Him, and peering into the storm, "when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, "Lord, save me." Alone with Jesus on the water, he repeated the cry with which he and his fellow-disciples awoke the Master when, in the former tempest, they well-nigh perished; and as then, there came to Peter the gentle rebuke, "Oh, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" But with the reproof there was the ready answer to Peter's short and earnest prayer, for "immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him."

When they entered the ship, the voiceless command of the Lord of the sea was obeyed:



“The winds ceased: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.”

After so grand a miracle by Him, not only the Twelve, but others joined in the cry, one of the first times it was uttered— “Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God.”

“ Oh Saviour, whose almighty word
The winds and waves submissive heard,
Who walked on the foaming deep,
And calm amidst its rage did sleep,
Oh, hear us when we cry to thee.”

Chapter XXXVII

Christ, the Bread of Life. A Heathen's Faith. At His Feet

Capernaum. Region of Tyre and Sidon. The Decapolis

When Jesus refused, after the miracle of feeding the five thousand, to be crowned as King, He was not so popular as before. Their thought was of earthly blessings, not spiritual. They looked for a King who would make their fruit-trees bear throughout the year, and their grain grow so that it could be gathered and ready for use as easily as their fruits, and the vines yield most luxurious and abundant grapes, and common trees bear delicious fruit, and the Holy Land have the richest and most numerous orchards and trees in all the world. When they "ate of the loaves and fishes, and were filled," they thought the kind of King they expected had come, but when Jesus refused to be crowned, they were disappointed, and would not believe Him to be the Messiah-King.

On His return to Capernaum, which he visited a few times, though it was no longer the home it

had been, He went to the Synagogue which the good Centurion had built, and of which Jairus was the chief ruler.

Over the door was a device, of which we have spoken, of a pot of manna, reminding the people of how God had fed their forefathers in the wilderness, as Jesus had miraculously fed the multitude on the plain with bread and fishes. He told them that as God had sent down manna to satisfy the hunger of the bodies of men, He had sent Him to give peace and eternal happiness to their spirits. He said, "I am the Bread of Life."

"The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, 'I am the Bread which came down from Heaven.'" He reminded them that their fathers who ate of the manna were dead. He called himself the Bread of Life which could give eternal happiness in Heaven, saying: "He that believeth on Me, hath everlasting life."

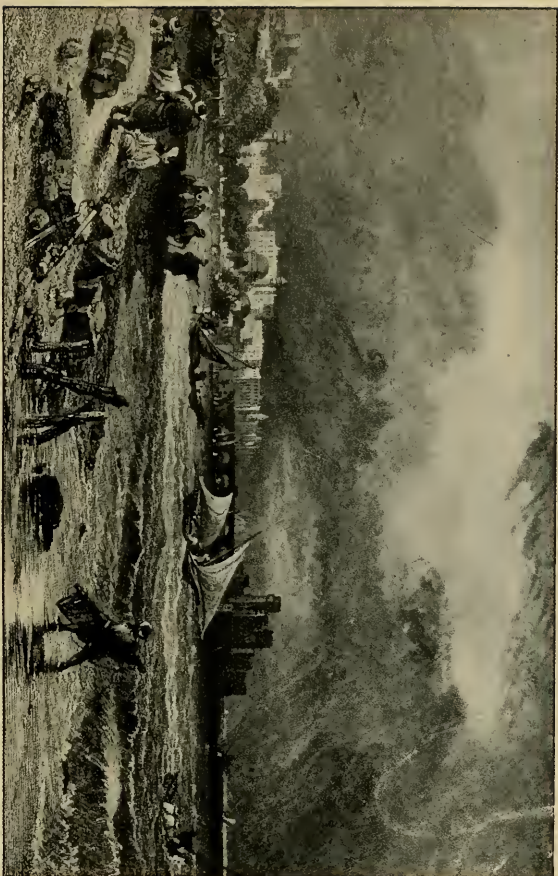
Many who had followed Him and professed to be His disciples, turned from Him, and "walked no more with Him." Then said Jesus to the Twelve: "Will ye also go away?" Then Simon Peter answered Him: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." While Jesus rejoiced in the answer, He was

also saddened by the thought that there was one of the Twelve who did not feel as Peter did. It was Judas, who was already becoming unfriendly to Jesus whom at last He was to betray to the enemies of his Lord.

Jesus left the shore of the Sea of Galilee, and crossing the country to the Mediterranean Sea, retired into the region of the cities of Tyre and Sidon. He "would have no man know it; but He could not be hid."

A mother, whose daughter was sorely afflicted, and who had heard of what He had done for others, came and fell at His feet, and besought Him that He would heal her child. She was a heathen woman, but had learned more about Jesus than many of the Jews who had long been with Him. He commended her faith in Him, because of which "her daughter was made whole."

Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee, to its south-eastern shore, into a region called Decapolis, inhabited by heathen who had heard of Him as a great wonder-worker. "And multitudes came unto Him having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and He healed them."



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SIDON

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Chapter XXXVIII

The Deaf Made to Hear and the Blind to See

Decapolis. Bethsaida-Julias

Among those brought to Jesus in Decapolis was one who was deaf. Probably he had not always been so. In childhood he had heard the sounds of life in his mountain home. But there he had not learned the lessons to which the Jewish child had listened in his home or synagogue. He had learned to speak and his words were like those of any other rude young mountaineer. But because of disease "he was deaf and had an impediment in his speech." Those few words tell a sad story of one shut out from the world; among men, yet alone, whose imperfect speech was a trial to himself and to his friends.

The heart of Jesus was always full of sympathy when the afflicted ones were brought to Him, and we may believe that often He showed it by word and manner of which we have no record. But we *are* told of how He showed it for this one, whose friends besought Him to lay His hands

upon him. He did so, but not in their presence. "He took him aside from the multitude," and alone Jesus looked upon him, and thought of his great trial—not only of his deafness and difficulty of speech, but also and yet more of his darkened mind and soul so difficult to reach. Did He not also think of the sorrows of multitudes of others, afflicted in tongue and ears and hands and feet; and of the troubles of spirit, worse than those of body, which He found wherever He went, and knew to be among all men? Glancing for a moment from this one sufferer, and "looking up to Heaven, He sighed." This is the only time of which we know of His so doing when performing a miracle of healing. The sadness of human suffering oppressed Him, even in the moment of relieving it.

The deaf man felt the touch of the Healer's hand in his ears and on his tongue; and then heard again, after years of silence, a voice, a human voice, the voice of Jesus with power Divine saying unto him, "Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain." Returning to the multitude which he had left in silence or confusion of speech, "they were beyond measure astonished." With

what joy must he have led their song concerning Jesus : " He hath done all things well : He maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

Once more we find Jesus on the north-east coast of the Sea of Galilee, where the friends of a blind man bring him to be healed. As the dumb man seems to have had his hearing and lost it, so the blind man seems to have lost his sight. As Jesus took the deaf man "aside from the multitude," He also "took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town." What were the words of the new guide, and what were the replies, as they walked alone hand in hand to some solitary place? We do not know, but there was wisdom in all that Jesus did. At last He released His hold of the blind man, and put His hands upon the sightless eyes. Asking the man if he saw anything, he replied, "I see men as trees walking." With his strained look, his dim sight returned slowly. There were forms moving about, such as he used to see clearly long before. Those were anxious moments ; but he was not to be disappointed. Another touch of the healing hands, "and he was restored and saw every man clearly," and gazed with delight on things long hidden from his view.

Chapter XXXIX

Four Thousand Guests. "Thou Art The Christ"

The Decapolis. Region of Cesarea Philippi

When Jesus fed the five thousand, His guests were mostly from Capernaum and its neighboring cities. They were Jews. He was now to repeat the miracle for four thousand people—not Jews, but Gentiles, who had been with Him three days, and whose food was gone. As He had spread a table in the wilderness for the one, He was equally ready to do it for the other. He said: "I have compassion on the multitude. I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way." His disciples seem to have been unmindful of the former miracle until He reminded them of it. Again they ask: "Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness as to fill so great a multitude?" And again He asked: "How many loaves have ye?" They answered: "Seven and a few fishes." Again He commanded to have the multitude seated on the ground, took the loaves and fishes, gave thanks, break them, and

gave to the disciples who distributed to the people, and gathered up seven baskets full of fragments.

Nearly thirty miles north of the Sea of Galilee is the town of Cesarea Philippi, near the foot of the lofty and snow-covered Mt. Hermon. It is beautifully situated on the slope of a steep elevation. Out from a cavern bursts the river Jordan, the sacred stream of the Holy Land, whose waters, passing through the Sea of Galilee, flow onward in a winding course into the Dead Sea. Near its mouth Jesus had been baptized at the opening of His ministry, and there the voice of His Father had been heard saying: "Thou art my beloved Son." Since that hour His words and works had proved Him to be the Son of God. But His own people, the Jews, had rejected Him in Nazareth, in Capernaum and elsewhere. "He came to His own and His own received Him not." It was a sad day for Him, and a sadder one for them, though they believed it not, when He ended His work of teaching and healing among them. In great sorrow He told of the woes that would come upon them, because they repented not of their sins, and believed not in Him as their Saviour, after they had heard His words and seen His mighty works.

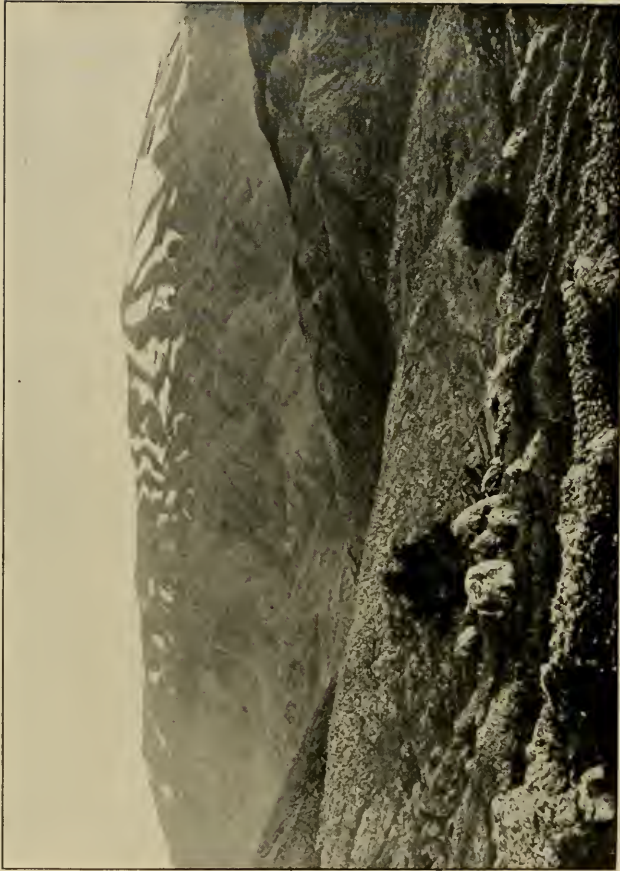
With His disciples He journeyed into the region of Cesarea Philippi. On the way He turned aside for a little while that He might be alone in prayer. He then called them to Him, and asked two solemn questions. The first was this: "Whom do men say that I am?" Their answer showed that the multitudes who had seen and heard Him did not understand that He was the Mèssiah, the Saviour, the promised King. Some said He was John the Baptist risen from the dead; some thought His preaching was so much like that of Elijah that this prophet must have appeared on earth again; others said it must be Jeremiah, or some other prophet.

Grieved at the answers given to His first question, he asked His disciples another: "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered for them all: "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*"

"The Christ" was filled with joy because His disciples at last understood who He was. He called Peter "blessed" because this knowledge had been given by His Father in Heaven, who, when Jesus was baptized, called Him his beloved Son.

But the Twelve were still mistaken about





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CESAREA PHILIPPI AND MOUNT HERMON

From Photograph

Christ as an earthly King with power and glory in which they hoped to share. So He told them what would soon happen ; that He would go to Jerusalem, that there He would be rejected by the rulers of the Jewish nation, as He had been rejected in Galilee, that He would be shamefully and cruelly treated, and even be killed ; but that on the third day after His death He would rise again. He did not then tell them of the awful manner in which He would die—by crucifixion. He told of that at a later day. They thought it impossible that all this would happen. “They understood not this saying.”

Peter was so surprised, and so sure that Jesus must be mistaken that he “took Him, and began to rebuke Him saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord : this shall not be unto Thee.” Though he spake thus because of his love for Jesus, it was a bold and ignorant and improper speech : So Jesus “rebuked Peter” telling him that he did not understand the thoughts and plans of God, and that he was always thinking of a worldly kingdom, instead of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Chapter XL

The Transfiguration. Lunatic Boy Healed

Mt. Hermon. Region of Caesarea Philippi

A week after the events of the last chapter, Jesus took His three favorite disciples, Peter, James and John, to witness the most glorious event of His life on earth, because it revealed something of the glories of Heaven. The place to which He led them was Mt. Hermon, "*The Mount*," which Peter called the *Holy Mount*, because of what there happened. It is the only mountain which is thus called in the Scriptures. Towering like a giant above all the other peaks of the Lebanon range, its head always covered with snow, its glittering splendor is visible from every direction. It is in clear view as far south as the Dead Sea. It was probably the highest spot of earth on which our Lord ever stood, and from which He had His most extensive view. From it He looked down upon Galilee, where He had taught and wrought, where He had been received by the few and rejected by the many. Rising

above the heated plain, the little company would be refreshed by the cooling breeze from the summit. The calm and solitude would be a relief from the scenes they had left below. "He leadeth them," says St. Mark, "up into a high mountain apart by themselves." The nine who tarried behind must have wondered, and the three had a strong expectation of something to happen. St. Luke reveals the Master's purpose. Hermon was to be added to the Lord's mountains of prayer. The three were the most enlightened of the Twelve; yet they needed more light concerning their Lord and His Kingdom, and more strength for what they must endure. There was need of prayer for them, and not only for them, but for Him. He went up to prepare Himself and them for His death, of which he had plainly told them a week before.

From their lofty height they could look across the country and see the sun sinking beneath the waters of the Mediterranean. Soon night hid Galilee—its sea and plains and villages. "He prayed," is the simple record of Jesus—to whom, we know; for whom, we can easily imagine; for just what, we are not told, as we are concerning His prayer in Gethsemane. "And as He prayed

He was transfigured before them." His appearance was changed. "His face did shine as the sun." "His raiment was white and glistening," like the snows above them.

Then came two visitors from Heaven. One was Moses, who fifteen hundred years before had been on another mountain, Sinai, where he had received the ten commandments, the Law of God, and given it to the Jewish people. They had not fully obeyed it. Jesus had come to keep it perfectly, and show how good it was; and also to make it possible for men who had broken it, to be saved by repentance and faith in Him. Moses had been long dead. His earthly body had been buried by God Himself alone on Mt. Pisgah, from which Moses had looked upon Hermon and prayed that he might go there before he died. God denied his prayer at that time, and told him not to ask again. But now his prayer was answered in a more glorious manner, as he came from Heaven to Hermon with his heavenly body, to talk with Jesus who for a little while appeared with His heavenly body.

The other visitor on the Holy Mount was Elijah, one of the greatest of the prophets, who one thousand years before had been taken to

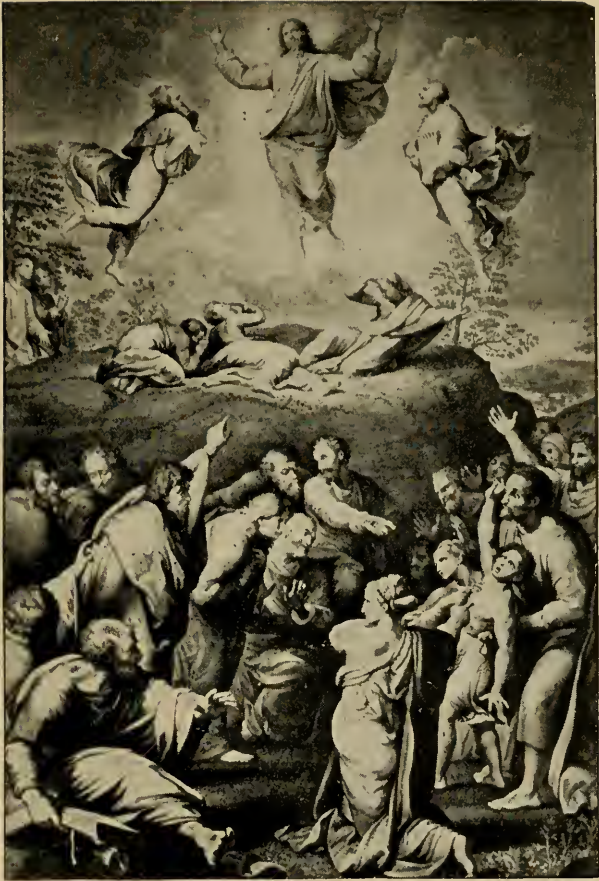
Heaven without dying. He had foretold of Christ—His coming to the world, His preaching, suffering and death, and of His being the Saviour of men.

Moses and Elijah were the two men whom the Jews most honored, and whose words they claimed should be obeyed.

Wearied with the labors of the day, the long walk and steep ascent, "Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep," against which they struggled, but in vain. So they did not witness the beginning of the wonderful vision of Jesus with Moses and Elijah. But "when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him," talking of His approaching death at Jerusalem. From the appearance and conversation of the heavenly visitants, the disciples understood who they were. Peter, bewildered with the sight, and unmindful of the certain death of Jesus, cried out, "Master, it is good for us to be here ; and let us make three tabernacles ; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He little thought how, in a little while, Jesus would not be between the Law-Giver and the Prophet in glory, but between two thieves in darkness and shame.

There came a cloud and overshadowed them. And there came a voice out of the cloud. It was the same once heard on the banks of the Jordan at the baptism of Jesus, saying, "This is my Beloved Son." And now on Hermon was added these words, "Hear ye *Him*." Jesus was greater than Moses and Elijah, and men must receive His words and obey them. The disciples, full of awe and fear, fell upon their faces. Jesus came and touched them. On the mountain, as on the sea, he bade them, "Be not afraid." The cloud passed away. The three looked for Moses and Elijah, but they had gone, and they saw "Jesus only." Peter never forgot Hermon, nor that night, nor that voice, nor the vision of Jesus. More than thirty years afterward he wrote these words: "The voice which came from Heaven we heard when we were with Him in the Holy Mount."

At early dawn of the summer morning the four descended the mountain. "And when they were come down, much people met them." In the crowd was the agonized father of a lunatic son, who had vainly hoped that the disciples on the plain could cure him. He told how the boy, his only child, had suffered all his life. "Bring him to me," said Jesus. As the father did so, he



cried out, "If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus gently reproved him for doubting His power, yet comforted him, saying, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." In agony, hope and fear, the father cried out with tears, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." The Lord healed the boy, and "delivered him again to his father," as, when He raised the young man at Nain from death, "He delivered him to his mother."

One of the greatest paintings in the world, by Raphael, represents the two contrasted scenes of the Transfiguration, and the Lunatic Boy Healed.

Chapter *XLI*

The Child in the Midst

Capernaum

Jesus and His disciples went from the region of Cesarea Philippi to Capernaum. It seems probable that Peter and His Master went ahead of the others to Peter's home. We do not know the subject of their conversation on the way. We may suppose it was of "the honor and glory in the Holy Mount." But we do know that by the way the other disciples—good men, but not perfect—"disputed among themselves who should be greatest" in the Kingdom of their Lord; for they were still mistaken, thinking He would reign like other kings on the earth.

It is possible that the nine who were on the plain while Peter, James and John were on the Mount, were jealous of the favored three. When they reached the house of Peter, they were ashamed to let Jesus know of their quarrel. But He, "perceiving the thought of their heart," broke the silence of their shame, and astonished them by

asking: "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace." He did not need any answer. "He knew what was in man." But not all remained silent. Some one, or more, still excited over the discussion by the way, asked the Master: "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" He did not answer the question.

In sadness He calmly "sat down and called the Twelve, and saith unto them: If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." But these words were not enough. So He taught them in another way. He called a little child to Him whom we may believe was Peter's son, and so within His call. Jesus "set him"—not before them, simply in their presence, but—"in the midst of them." He "set him by Him." Then "He took him up in His arms." The Twelve did not understand His purpose in all this. But "Jesus himself knew what He would do" with the child, as He did with "the lad" whom He used to feed the five thousand. They watched His treatment of the boy with curiosity. They were not friendly, as we shall see, toward childhood; and had no thought of learning lessons from it. That scene

was not to them what it has become to us, a pleasing subject for sculptor and painter, parent and teacher.

If the conduct of Jesus, in setting the child in the midst of the disciples, excited their curiosity, His words must have astonished them even more, when He said: "Except ye be converted"—be turned from the proud and ambitious spirit I see in you—"and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." What did He mean by this? What are the things in good children, in which apostles and all others should be like them? They are gentleness, trust, kindness, obedience, humility, love.

We are not told what was the effect of Christ's words and of the child-example on the disciples. We fear they did not learn the lesson thoroughly, for we find the same mistaken thoughts and proud spirit again.

But in time all this was changed. They at last understood what the Lord meant by His Kingdom, and no longer asked who in it should be greatest. Their thoughts of childhood changed, and feelings toward it, especially Peter's, as we shall see.

With the child in His arms, Jesus gave the

disciples a solemn warning about the treatment of children, and told of something that should make every child very happy, and careful to do right. His words were these: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven."

Chapter XLII

The Home in Bethany

Bethany

After a brief stay in Capernaum, Jesus once more journeyed toward Jerusalem, where would soon be held the Feast of Tabernacles. It was the holiest and greatest of the three yearly feasts, and known as "*The Feast.*" It was to remind the Jews of the time when their forefathers journeyed from Egypt to the Holy Land, through the wilderness, where they lived in booths or tents, having no home for forty years. Being in the harvest season, it was also a thanksgiving feast. During the eight days that it lasted, the men especially, lived in booths made of boughs of olive, and palm, and pine, and myrtle; reared in the courts of the houses, in the streets, and outside the city walls. It was a time of great rejoicing for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and those who came in great numbers from all parts of the country.

Near to the city, separated from it by the Mount of Olives, was the village of Bethany. We are

interested in it because of one of its homes—that of two sisters, Martha and Mary, and their brother Lazarus. Jesus loved them ; and they loved Him, making Him a most welcome guest when on His visits to Jerusalem. Thither He often went to rest in quiet and companionship, after days of toil and unfriendliness in the city.

When on His way to the feast, “Martha received Him into her house.” She was a busy, active house-keeper, anxious to do all she could for her honored and beloved Guest and Teacher. “She had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard His words.” They were all alike in devotion to their Lord, though showing it in different ways. We may think of Jesus as in the booth in the court-yard while Martha was going back and forth between it and the house, listening awhile to His words, which were food for her spirit, and then providing food for His body. But Mary remained with Him. So precious was every moment with Him, and so interested was she in all He said, that she seemed unmindful of the work her sister was doing for Him who was the Friend and Lord of them both, and whom they would serve with equal honor. Martha, good and loving as she was, perhaps wearied with her labors,

while Mary was delightfully resting, became a little jealous of her sister and lost her calmness.

No doubt Mary would have been willing to help, but Martha did not ask her. In hurry and excitement and impatience she complained to Jesus. This was unkind and somewhat irreverent. We may think she felt sorry afterwards that she had so done. Her words were these: "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me." But the Lord did not bid his loving pupil to leave Him. Instead, he gave a gentle reproof to her troubled sister. It was "half-sad, half-playful, yet wholly kind." May there not have been a forgiving smile as well as a reproofing look on His face when "Jesus said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

Chapter XLIII

The Feast of Tabernacles

Jerusalem

Pilgrims from all parts of the country, on arriving at the Feast, were anxious to see the great Healer and Teacher.

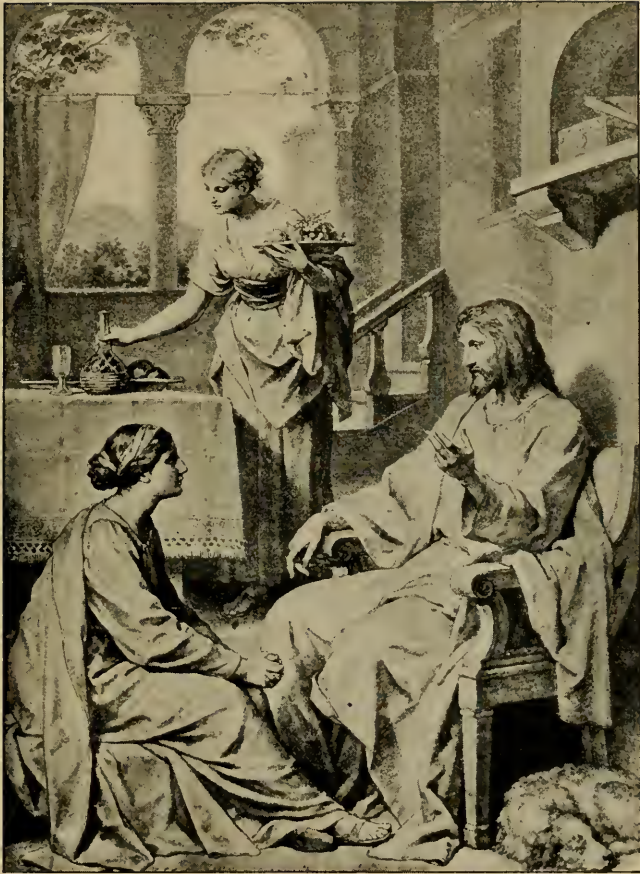
During the first two festive days they inquired and looked for Him in vain. Suddenly He appeared in the Temple, teaching, probably in Solomon's Porch, where the multitude could gather about Him. Some of them were friendly, glad of the opportunity for seeing and hearing Him whose fame had reached their most distant homes. Others were his foes, some of them rulers seeking to kill Him, but standing in awe before Him, and not daring to seize Him among so many who would defend Him.

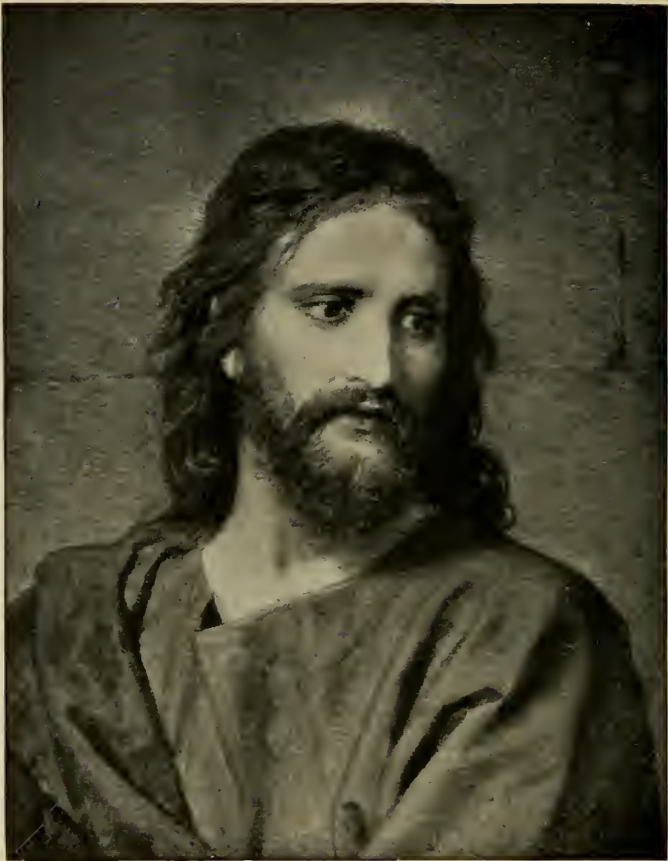
On the last, the great day of the Feast, there was a most interesting service. A solemn procession, marching to the sound of music, left the Temple, following a priest carrying a golden pitcher. At the foot of the mountain on which

the Temple stood was the Pool of Siloam, of whose waters the priest filled the pitcher, which was carried back in great solemnity. As he entered the "Water-gate"—so called after this ceremony—a three-fold blast of trumpets told the people that he had returned, and they must be ready to welcome him and take their part in the service. Led by the flute-players, and repeating the words of the priest, the people said, "Oh give thanks unto the Lord: Oh Lord, send now prosperity:" and again, "Oh give thanks to the Lord." Priests and people chanted songs of praise, with sound of trumpets, and the people bowed in worship.

Before the altar was a silver basin, into which the priest bearing the golden pitcher, poured the water from Siloam. As he did so, the worshippers waved the branches they bore, chanting a psalm of praise, while the blasts of the trumpets rang through the Temple courts. There was a Jewish proverb that he "who has never seen the rejoicing at the pouring out of the waters of Siloam, has never seen rejoicing in all his life."

But there was a greater joy for the multitude if they had only believed it. Suddenly, with calm





Page 209 "NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN" *Hofmann*

and earnest voice, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

It was the same kind of invitation He had given the woman of Samaria at the well of Sychar. "He spake of the spirit which they that believe on Him should receive," giving them a joy greater and more lasting than what they found in that Temple service.

As He spake, many thought of Him as a great Prophet. Others said, "This is the Christ." Others, when they heard Him so called, were angry, and hated Him yet more than they had done.

Officers had been sent by the Pharisees to seize Him in the Temple, and bring Him to them that they might destroy Him. But, as they listened to His words, so wise and kind, and saw how innocent He appeared, they were filled with awe, their courage failed them, and they returned without Him. The chief priests and Pharisees, in their disappointment and anger, asked them, "Why have ye not brought Him?" The officers gave an answer which was a great truth: "Never man spake like this man." For this they were called ignorant, and treated with ridicule. Nico-

demus, friendly toward Jesus, though timid in showing it, spoke kindly about Him, telling the rulers that no man should be unjustly condemned, and that without trial. But his words only made them the more angry, and they treated him also, with contempt.

Chapter XLIV

Healing of a Man Born Blind

Jerusalem

“I am the Light of the World.” That is what Jesus called Himself within the Temple court. And such He came from Heaven to be. Ignorance is compared to darkness, and Truth to light. Jesus was *the* Truth, showing by His life the most important things for men to know, telling them of what they had never heard, and what they could not know without Him. So He was *the* Light of the World. But the proud teachers of the Jewish nation were so displeased with what Jesus claimed to be, that they took up stones to cast at Him ; but in some way He hid Himself from them and passed out of the Temple. It was His Father’s House, where in childhood He had thoughts about His “Father’s business,” and where in manhood he was “about” it. He was the Great Teacher, *the* Light that the Father had sent into the world to show men the way to Heaven. He is the light of their spirits. With-

out Him they are in a sadder condition than that of the man "blind from his birth," whom Jesus saw as He passed out of one of the Temple-gates, or by the road-side.

To be "born blind"—never to look into the face of father, mother or friends; never to roam and play freely and indulge in delights of childhood where the eye alone can guide; never to watch the flowing of the streams or the flight of birds, or the floating of the clouds along the blue sky; never to gaze on the beauty of flowers, or even know what is meant by their colors; never to turn the leaves of a book, charmed with its pictures; never to look on mountain and plain, sea and grove; to only guess at what friends try in vain to describe; never to know some delights of which others tell; to have all this continued through years of childhood, youth and manhood without one hope of a change—this is sad, sad, indeed. And then to be unable to labor, and to be dependent on friends themselves poor, or on strangers, for daily bread, this is sadder still.

It was such a poor blind beggar, well known at the city gates, whom Jesus saw near the Temple, and before whom He stopped, though escaping from His enemies.

As He looked kindly, piteously upon him, the disciples asked a question, strange to us, but not then and there. To be born blind was thought a judgment from God because of some great wickedness, and so they asked, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" He told them that they were wrong in their judgment—that his blindness did not prove that he or his parents were greater sinners than others; but that there was a wise purpose in God's permitting his blindness—that in him Christ should show His mercy and power.

All this while the blind man was silent, but must have been busy in thought. Perhaps he, too, had supposed that his affliction was because of great sin, and was made happy in hearing the Master say it was not so. How grateful he must have felt for the kind words: how full of wonder who the stranger was that knew his history and that of his parents; how hopeful that Christ's mercy and power would now be shown in the gift of sight to him.

At last there was silence. Those were anxious moments of waiting as the poor man wondered what the Master was doing. Jesus "spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and

He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay ; and said unto him, Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam." Not doubting the power of Him who had spoken so kindly and wisely, the man quickly obeyed the strange command, groping his way with his staff, through the city gate, and down the Kidron Valley, followed by a curious or jeering crowd, to the Pool of Siloam. Where the priest had drawn water in the golden pitcher, he dipped with his hand, and washed the clay from his eyes. And lo ! he looked upon the world in which he lived, but had never seen, and returned with yet greater joy than did the priest bearing his glad-some water to the Temple.

We may think of him as gratefully seeking his great Healer, whom he did not then find ; and then going to his astonished home, meeting many who had long known him only as the blind beggar, but now the wonder of Jerusalem ; some saying : " This *is* he ;" others, " He is *like* him ;" while he himself declared with gladness, " *I am* he." With what emotion he looked for the first time into the face of his mother, who from his infancy had gazed upon his sightless eyes wondering why this great sorrow had come upon them.



The happy day in which the blind man was healed was the Sabbath. The Jewish rulers had made foolish rules about keeping it holy, which Jesus would not obey. They asked the healed man what He had done to him. He told them. They said: "This man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day." "We know this man is a sinner." Again, and yet again, they asked what Jesus had done, trying to find something against Him. The man sharply and justly reproved them, and defended his Healer. They became more and more angry, reviling him and Jesus, and, at last, drove him from them; forbidding him to enter the Temple or Synagogue, and the people to speak to, or help him.

Jesus heard of their unkindness and injustice, and having found him, told him that He was the Son of God. The happy man looked with his eyes upon Jesus who had opened them; and with his spirit he saw what Jesus meant when, in the Temple, He said: "I am the Light of the World."

Chapter XLV

The Shepherd-Saviour

Jerusalem

Seven hundred years before Christ was born, the prophet Isaiah said to the Jews, "Behold, the Lord God shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs in His arms and carry them in His bosom." A hundred and twenty-five years later, God said to the Jews through the Prophet Ezekiel, "Ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men and I am your God." And again He said of the Jews, "I will set up one shepherd over them; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd." At last Christ came, saying, "*I am the Good Shepherd.*" He said it just after the miracle at the Pool of Siloam.

The blind beggar of Jerusalem, healed by Christ, knew more about Him than did the Pharisees who claimed to be the wise teachers and leaders of the people. But being themselves ignorant of who Christ was, and rejecting His teachings, they were unfit to teach others.

To Jesus the blind man healed, cast out by

them, seemed like a poor sheep having an unfaithful and cruel shepherd. He claimed to be, what indeed He was, not only a shepherd, not only a good shepherd, but *the* Good Shepherd—the “true shepherd”—unlike them, and better than any other, however good. He explained to them why He was such, and who were His sheep.

In the land where Jesus lived a shepherd gave more care to his flock than shepherds do in our country. He stayed with them by day and often by night. He gave to each of his sheep a name which it learned to know, and it came at the shepherd's call. He remembered that they were not strong, and could not help themselves like many animals. He went before them and they followed him, trusting him when they would not a stranger of whom they would be afraid. He led them to fields of green grass where they ate and rested ; and to springs and streams of which they drank ; and to the great rocks and groves where the hot sun could not shine upon them. When one wandered he looked for it and brought it back to the fold. He was kind and helpful to the sick and lame, and especially to the lambs. He guarded them all from the wild beasts, which

he killed or drove away, even at the risk of his own life.

Jesus called all good men and women His sheep, and all good children His lambs. He takes care of them because He loves them. He remembers how easily they sin and helps them to do right. He knows each one by name, and cares for them always and everywhere, as no shepherd can do for his sheep.

When Jesus was on earth, He taught men by His words and example how to be good. When they do like Him, they follow Him. When they have good thoughts, they know that His Spirit is teaching them. They do not fear Him. When they are tempted, and it is hard to do right, He helps them. When they sin, He is sorry for them, and helps them to be good again.

He loves little children: they are His lambs. He knows they are often tempted. He watches over them to keep them from becoming bad men and women. Jesus in heaven is better to little children than a shepherd is to the little lambs in the field.

It is because Jesus does such things that He said, "I am the Good Shepherd." Then He gave another reason why He deserved the name. He



said, "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." This He did as we shall see.

Those who were His friends when He was on the earth are not His only sheep. He said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." All people, old and young, everywhere and in all ages of the world, who love, obey and trust Him, are of His fold which is on earth and in Heaven.

Chapter XLVI

The Lord's Prayer

Peræa

When Jesus had finished His sermon in the Temple by declaring Himself to be the Good Shepherd, "there was a division among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him?" Others said, "These are not the words of Him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" He had said and done what he could to prove that He was the Son of God, come from Heaven to show the way thither. But many sought to take His life, repaying His goodness with ingratitude, hatred and cruelty. So He left Jerusalem for Peræa beyond the Jordan. One of the first incidents of His ministry there, was His teaching His disciples what we call, "*The Lord's Prayer.*"

"It came to pass as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Where that "certain place"

was, we do not certainly know, but it was a sacred spot, from which sounded forth the model prayer, to be repeated in all lands, and in all languages, and through all time, until its petition, "Thy Kingdom come," has been fulfilled. It is in seven parts, of which four are about God, and three about ourselves.

1. OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

Jesus taught us to call God our Father. In the Old Testament the Jews had read of Him as Holy, and Almighty and Just; a Great King to be adored. They often feared more than they loved Him. They understood what was meant by a good earthly father, loving his child, caring for it, watching over it, providing for it at all times, doing all he could for its comfort and safety and happiness, showing himself wise and good in all he did for it; and so, was worthy of the child's obedience and trust and love. Jesus taught that God is better far than the best, or even a perfect, earthly father. He can give us all good things, and hear and answer our prayers. So we should love, trust, obey and worship Him.

2. HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

"Hallowed" means holy. Such God is,

always has been, and always will be. Even holy angels in Heaven think of Him as so much better than all other beings that they call Him "Holy, Holy, Holy." When we say to God, "Hallowed be Thy name," we mean that we want everybody to honor Him because of His holiness.

3. THY KINGDOM COME.

This is the Kingdom for which Christ came from Heaven to earth, and suffered and died. God is the Great King. When we say, "Thy Kingdom come," we mean that we want everybody, everywhere, always to obey Him.

4. THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

By God's will we mean what He wants everybody to do. It is done by everybody in Heaven. It is not done by everybody on the earth; if it were, earth would be much like Heaven. There are two ways of doing God's will—by being good, and by doing good.

5. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

By bread we mean food, clothes, and other things for our bodies. God gives them to us by causing the sunshine and rain, and by making to grow the plants and animals from which we are

fed and clothed. We have daily needs, and so should offer daily prayers.

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS ; OR, FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.

By "debts" and "trespasses" we mean sins. All have sinned by not always being good, and doing good. We ask God to forgive us, treating us as if we had not sinned. This He does if we truly repent. If we do this we shall have kind feelings towards those who have wronged us, and forgive them. The Lord said, "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven."

7. AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

Persons lead us into temptation when they try to make us do wrong. God never tempts us. Satan is the great tempter. We pray God that He will not allow us to be tempted by any one, or will keep us from yielding to temptation. By "evil" we mean sin and trouble. We pray God to "deliver us" from both.

After the petitions for ourselves in the Lord's Prayer, there is a beautiful addition which we always use, in these words :

A Life of Christ

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER,
AND THE GLORY FOR-EVER.

By this we mean that God is the Great King of Heaven and earth ; that He can do what He pleases always and everywhere ; and that He is so good and great that everybody in Heaven and earth should honor and praise Him for-ever.

And because we truly want God to hear and answer the prayer the Lord taught us, we say *Amen*.

Let us remember these things whenever we repeat this short, simple prayer, which we review in the following form, as given in Matt. 6: 9-13.

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| ABOUT GOD | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our Father which art in Heaven. 2. Hallowed be Thy name. 3. Thy Kingdom come. 4. Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven. |
| ABOUT OURSELVES | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Give us this day our daily bread. 6. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 7. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. |
| DOXOLOGY | { | <p style="text-align: center;">For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory,
for-ever ;
Amen.</p> |







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THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Gustave Doré

Chapter XLVII

The Good Samaritan

Near Jerusalem

After an absence of two months, Jesus returned to Jerusalem at the time of the "Feast of the Dedication of the Temple." Once more we find Him speaking to the people, in Solomon's Porch. He spoke to the Jews of His Father's work, of which He had spoken in the same place more than twenty years before, to His mother. But they did not attend to His words as she had done. They said to Him, "If Thou be Christ, tell us plainly." He reminded them of what He had said and done to prove that he was the Christ, the Son of God; and then said, "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep." He declared, "I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him," saying He was guilty of the awful sin of blasphemy. But He escaped out of their hands, and went away again beyond Jordan.

We cannot always tell with certainty just when

or where Jesus said certain things ; but that makes little difference compared with what He said.

About this time when He was near Jerusalem or in Peræa, He was asked, "Who is my neighbor?" The questioner was a lawyer. Jesus answered him by a parable, or, as some believe, by a story of what had happened.

Like all travelers between Jerusalem and Jericho I well remember the "Bloody Way." It gets its name from its history. It is a lonely desert road, through a rocky gorge. Now, as in the days of Christ, it is a dangerous region. In going over it my only safety and that of my fellow-travelers from robbers, was in the guns of our guard. It was this "Bloody Way" that Jesus had in mind when He said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." A terrible story is told in those few words. They have for ages excited the sympathy of the Christian world.

As he lay naked, his quivering wounds bleeding from the robber-blows, pale and speechless, yet with imploring looks, a certain priest, on his way to his solemn duties in the temple at Jerusa-

lem, saw him, but without a kind word or helping act "passed by on the other side." A simple glance was enough for him. The wounded man still lay helpless and alone.

Then came a Levite, reviving in the wounded man the disappointed hope of help from some friend of humanity; but though he "came and looked on him" a little longer and more intently than did the priest, he also "passed by on the other side."

A third man came near: like the others "he saw," but unlike them, "he had compassion." But this was not all. While the others had shrunk away as if from pollution, he went to the wounded man and tenderly cared for him, "and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." He would not leave him alone, exposed to yet other dangers. He lifted him upon his own beast, walking by his side along the hard, hot, dusty road, supporting as best he could the feeble form full of pain, till he reached a wayside inn, where he tarried with him during the night. Before renewing his journey, having lost a day but saved a life, he gave the keeper of the inn the money which cost him two days of labor, with promise of more if needed.

Now this man was a Samaritan, whose people hated the Jews and were hated by them. But he was tender-hearted, ready to help and comfort a Jew or any other man.

And so Jesus by this story answered the question, "Who is my neighbor?"

When He had finished the parable He asked the lawyer, "Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbor to him that fell among thieves?" The man did not say it was the *Samaritan*; he seems to have hated the name too much for that. So he answered, "He that had mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."

Chapter XLVIII

Parable of the Lost Sheep

Peræa

In a letter which St. Peter wrote to Christians he said, "Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls"—which is Christ. Perhaps he remembered a parable he had heard Christ speak twenty-seven years before in Peræa—that of the *Lost Sheep*.

It was one of a hundred sheep which in its folly and ignorance had strayed from the fold, and wandered on the mountains until it was lost. There it was alone, weary and footsore, torn by the brambles, hungry and thirsty, and exposed to death from wild beasts, or falling into a deep rocky ravine. But the good shepherd, anxious for the safety of the one, left the ninety and nine, sought the wanderer, found it, laid it upon his shoulder rejoicing, and brought it back to the fold.

Christ compared that straying sheep to any one of us, all of whom are sinners. In sinning we wander from Him, by thinking less and less

of Him, and by not following Him in being and doing good ; so finding it harder and harder to change from bad to good. Because of sin, we have trouble and sorrow. Left to ourselves we would continue in sin while we live.

But Christ has not left us to ourselves. He has for us such love as no shepherd can have for his sheep. Because of this love, He came from Heaven to earth to "seek and to save that which was lost" in sin. We cannot know the full meaning of that word "lost"—the loss of holiness, of the favor of God, and hope of Heaven. But this need not be. That holiness, and favor and hope may be gained, not by good works of which the Jewish teachers taught, but by repentance, which is turning from sin to the loving and forgiving Father—God.

Angels understand better than we do the sad consequences of sin, and the happiness that follows repentance. They know when any one turns to Christ by turning from sin. This is why He, after giving the parable of the Lost Sheep, uttered these wonderful words, which show the angelic interest in us : "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."



Chapter XLIX

The Prodigal Son

Peraea

Certain Pharisees and scribes said concerning Jesus, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." The words were uttered in a proud and angry spirit ; but they were true and blessed words, showing His love for those whom the Pharisees despised. Jesus answered the murmuring words in three Parables, the last of which is that of the Prodigal Son. It is so beautiful and full of instruction that it is called the Pearl of Parables—the best of all. It tells of sin and repentance, the wonderful love of God, and the great joy in Heaven over the repentant sinner. Here is the story.

The younger of two sons of a loving and wealthy father became dissatisfied with his home. He did not like its restraints. He wanted to go where he could do as he pleased. He thought of the time when his father would die, and he, being the younger son, would receive one-third of the property. He wanted it before his father's

death that he might have it to spend in seeking pleasure. So he foolishly asked for what he could not then claim. He "said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." Having received it, he tarried a few days in the home of comfort and love and everything it was right for him to desire. Then, still unsatisfied, "he took his journey into a far country." One thing went with him which he did not deserve; and for which he did not care, or he would not have gone. It was his father's love, more precious and more lasting than all the treasures he carried.

Far from his home, away from all things that would help him to be good, he "wasted his substance in riotous living." This is why he was called a prodigal.

While his money lasted he had plenty of friends—so called; but they were friends of *it* rather than of him; so that when it was gone, they were gone. His wicked companions, on whom he had spent his "substance," now despised him. For the first time in his life, "he began to be in want;" not only of friends, but of a home of any kind, of clothing and food, of the comforts of life, and of money wherewith to buy them.

He had been heartless toward his father. And now a citizen of the far country whither he had gone, was heartless toward him—a beggared stranger pleading for pity and help. The man did not turn him entirely away, but “sent him into his fields to feed swine”—a most degrading service, especially to a Jew. In his desperate hunger he was almost ready to eat of the carob-pods he fed to the swine, for “no man gave unto him.”

There was an old saying among the Jews that when any were “reduced to the carob-tree they became repentant.” So it was with the prodigal. He thought of the distant home, its plenty of food, even for the servants, his foolish and wicked life, his sin against God and his father, his unworthiness to be called a son. Thus thinking he “came to himself,” and resolved to return with confession of sin, and asking to be received by his father, not as a son, but as a servant.

So the swine-herd turned his back toward the swine ; the son, his face toward his father. His long, sad journey was nearing its end, but the old home was still in the distance.

“When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him.” The love that had hoped and waited,

evermore on the lookout for the prodigal's return, was now rewarded. With quicker step than that of his returning boy, he "ran" to meet him. With the first glance at his abject son "he was moved with compassion." He was not repulsed by the soiled and tattered garments, nor by the face marred by sin and want; "he fell on his neck and covered him with kisses." The penitent boy began to repeat the form of words which he had said in the swine-field, saying, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." He would have asked to be his servant, but was interrupted by the assurances of his father's love, unchanged by his wayward life. Of this, three tokens were immediately given. The servants were commanded to "bring forth the best robe"—the upper garment of the higher classes—"and put it on him," to take the place of the coarse tattered, soiled garments; and then to "put a ring on his hand," whose once jeweled fingers had become bare; and then, to put sandals on the feet made weary and sore by the tedious journey.

But these tokens were not enough; so the father bid the servants "Bring hither the fatted calf"—seemingly kept awaiting the wanderer's



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THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

G. Doré

return, when a joyous feast should be his welcome home.

These things the servants did to him who had thought to become one of them, but to whom they were henceforth to look as to a new young master whom they must honor and obey because the son of his father's love.

While all this was passing the elder son was in the field. Approaching the house he heard music and dancing. Asking what these things meant, the servants told him that his brother had come, and that their father had killed the fatted calf for a feast of gladness. But he had no welcome for his brother, nor kind feeling toward his father. He would not go into the house. The father, who ran to meet his erring but repentant son, now hastened to the angry brother, entreating him to join in the festive welcome, and reminding him of the abundance he had always received in his home. But the replies were angry, bitter, unjust and untruthful. How tender were the father's words: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Chapter L

Dives and Lazarus. The Pharisee and the Publican

Peræa

While yet in Paræa, Jesus spoke other parables to teach men what is right and how to do it. But His wise, faithful, solemn, loving teachings were not received by many. "They derided Him" with mocking gestures and words, yet pretending to have great goodness. Jesus told them how they might appear well "before men," but be an "abomination in the sight of God."

He contrasted a proud, unfeeling, rich man, called Dives, with a poor but righteous beggar, named Lazarus, telling how changed their conditions when they died; Dives "tormented," but Lazarus "comforted."

He spake a "parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." He told of a Pharisee and a Publican praying in the Temple. The Pharisee boasted of his goodness, and thanked God that he was so much better than other men, even the

hated Publican, who showed himself the better of the two by humbly and penitently saying : "God be merciful to me a sinner." For this the Publican was commended by Jesus, who declared that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

But all such teaching was unwelcome to those for whom it was especially intended.

"He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem."

Chapter LI

The Raising of Lazarus

Bethany

Before leaving Bethany in P'eræa, Jesus received a message from Martha and Mary in their home in the other Bethany, in these words: "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick," meaning their brother Lazarus. The messenger carried back a most comforting reply: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

The disciples inferred that Lazarus would not die, but be healed, as was the Nobleman's son when "he was at the point of death." But Lazarus probably died that very day.

Jesus continued His work two days longer before proceeding on His journey. He then said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." They reminded Him of how the Jews had lately sought to stone Him; but He assured them of His safety until the work He had to do had been performed.

Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Doubtless the Twelve had all come to regard Lazarus as a friend to them as well as to Him. So all were interested in the result of his illness, rejoicing that the Master could say he "sleepeth." To three of the disciples the words must have seemed almost an echo of those spoken in the home of Jairus, "The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth;" but they seem to have been silent, or to have forgotten what meaning He gave to the word "sleepeth."

Jesus continued, "I go that I may awake him out of sleep." This seemed strange when sleep is so sweet and refreshing to the wearied and enfeebled sick. The disciples thought only of natural "rest in sleep." Then said Jesus to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. Let us go unto him."

This time it was not Peter—often the first to speak—but Thomas who responded, in words that showed his love for his Master and boldness in showing it. Believing that there was danger of death to Jesus and even His disciples, if they accompanied Him, he nevertheless said, "unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go that we may die with Him." In this he was sincere, though in a

few days they all fled from His enemies, leaving Him alone with them.

From early morning to sunset the Master and His Twelve journeyed twenty miles from one Bethany to the other, outside of which he tarried. He thus avoided His enemies, who were yet friends of the bereaved sisters and had come from Jerusalem to comfort them.

Martha hearing that the Lord was near, hastened to meet him with the mournful words, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Still she had a vague hope that in some way He would help in their sorrow. When Jesus assured her that her brother would rise again, she thought only of "the resurrection at the last day." Then He spoke to her these blessed words, hard to explain because so full of meaning and mystery: "I am the Resurrection and the Life." She assured Him of her belief that He was "the Christ, the son of God, which should come into the world." We are not told what other words passed between them, but we may believe that Martha's assurance concerning Christ was enough to comfort her and satisfy Him. His thought now turned toward the lonely one surrounded by mourning friends who "came to Martha and Mary to comfort them





concerning their brother." He had greater comfort than they all could give, and sent for her.

So Martha "went her way and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee." The record of St. John seems almost unnecessary, that "she arose quickly, and came unto Him."

It was the custom for mourning friends, especially during the first four days of their sorrow, to visit the grave. So when Mary "rose up hastily and went out" her friends thought that she had gone to the grave to weep there; but it was the joy mingled with her sorrow that quickened her steps.

What a meeting was that between the loved and loving Mary and her loved and loving Lord. On meeting Him, her sad exclamation was the same Martha had uttered, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Often in the four days must the sisters have expressed the thought to each other. In the utmost tenderness He looked upon her sobbing and weeping, and listened to her broken cry of anguish. We long to know His tender words. We do know His tender sympathy. The shortest verse in the Bible is one of its most most precious gems—

“Jesus wept.” Mary saw *Him* weeping as the Son of *Man*, whom Martha had just declared to be “The Son of *God*.” And such he would show Himself to be then and there.

Going to the cave-tomb of Lazarus He bid those around to roll away the stone that covered its entrance. Silence was broken by Martha. Hers was a mingled feeling of sorrow, awe, hope and fear; a belief in the love and power of her Lord, yet hardly daring to think He would manifest them in now fulfilling His own words, “Thy brother shall rise again.” She spoke to Him of the change in her brother’s body during the four days since His death. In gentle reproof “Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God”—that “glory of God” concerning which He had sent His message of comfort from Bethany in Peræa

The Son of God lingered a few moments at the door of the tomb. Martha had said to Him: “I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.”

“And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always.”

Turning His gaze downward to the tomb, He cried aloud: "Lazarus, come forth." And the dead obeyed and came forth, to begin life anew; a continued blessing in a once sad, but now joyous home; and a perpetual witness to the power of Him who by the sealed tomb, declared Himself "The Resurrection and the Life."

Chapter LII

Christ Blessing the Little Children

Peræa

After a brief stay in Bethany, Jesus went with His disciples to some unknown region of Peræa, remaining in retirement until the Pascal Feast. He then joined one of the bands journeying toward Jerusalem, healing and teaching on the way.

An incident furnishes one of the most beautiful pictures in the life of Christ, revealing His thoughts and feelings concerning women in their homes, and especially of childhood.

Let it be remembered that the position of woman then and there was not what it has become in lands now called by His name ; nor did childhood command the love and attention it now receives. The wives and mothers were not the queens of their homes. In conversation with certain Pharisees, Jesus defended some of them who were treated unjustly and unkindly, contrary to the spirit and teachings of God.

We read of women who loved Jesus, followed



CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN

'Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me: for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.' —Matt. xix. 14.

Him, gave presents to Him, ministered unto Him, received Him into their homes, brought their children to Him. In all the sad story of His earthly trials, we do not read of an unkind act by a woman's hand. When He tarried in that unknown but blessed village, and spoke kindly of women to unmanly men, His words seem to have quickly found their way to the neighboring homes. Like a great magnet of love and power He drew the mothers to Himself. They hastened to greet the truest Friend they ever had. But they came not alone. Their two-fold love for Him and for their children prompted them to bring their little ones to Him. They would not so have offended the dignity of a Jewish Rabbi. Even His disciples thought it an improper act.

We can imagine their watching the "infants" brought, and the "little children" led, and the "young children" following their mothers; and this with an unwelcome spirit. Custom would not allow those mothers to speak to a man on the way; but they dared to approach Him who was greater than any they could meet, emboldened by what they knew of His tender spirit and gentle manner.

But it was not for themselves that they sought

His presence so much as for their children. The motherly wish of some was that He would "*touch*" their little ones, as if thereby goodness might be imparted to their spirits, as His touch had imparted healing to the leprous and the blind. Some would have Him "put His *hands* on them." Did this betoken a yet larger blessing? Some would have Him "*pray*" over and for their children.

But before their smaller or greater requests could be fully made, their zeal was checked. As a messenger said to Jairus when guiding Jesus to his desolate home, "Why *troublest* thou the Master?" so now the disciples "rebuked" not only the unoffending mothers, but also their innocent children. The object lesson—the child in the midst, in the house of Peter—was yet unlearned. They mistook their Master's thoughts and feelings. They mistook the motherly and womanly confidence in approaching Him, for unwomanly boldness. But again He became the defender of the wronged:

When the children cried Hosanna in the Temple, He rebuked the chief priests who were "sore displeased." When the disciples rebuked the mothers and children, Jesus was "much dis-



pleased"—“the only time this strong word is ever used of the Lord.” His rebuke is recorded by the three Evangelists who have preserved the story.

It has become the Golden Text for and of childhood, which lisps its words long before their meaning can be understood, yet with the feeling that it contains a precious truth for each and every child, everywhere and always. St. Matthew, who was one of the rebuked disciples, remembered them for many years, and thus recorded them :

“SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN, AND FORBID THEM NOT, TO COME UNTO ME : FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”

Their coming to Him does not complete the story. The simple “touch” for which some of the mothers asked was not enough to satisfy the love of Jesus. “He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them.” Would that St. Matthew had given us the words of the blessing as well as of the reproof.

Reminding the disciples of the lesson they had forgotten, or never learned, He repeated it in almost the same words : “Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein.”

Art has tried long and hard to recall that scene. Imagination has given varied grouping, attitude and expression. But neither painter's brush nor sculptor's chisel can start the thrill caused by the touch, the hand, the arms of Jesus, and the words he uttered.

Yet the pictured story is ever fresh, and childhood listens to it as to none other. What Christian mother does not wish she, too, had been with the Master as she hears her child plaintively sing :

“ I should like to have been with Him then.”

Chapter LIII

The Rich Young Ruler. The Request of James and John

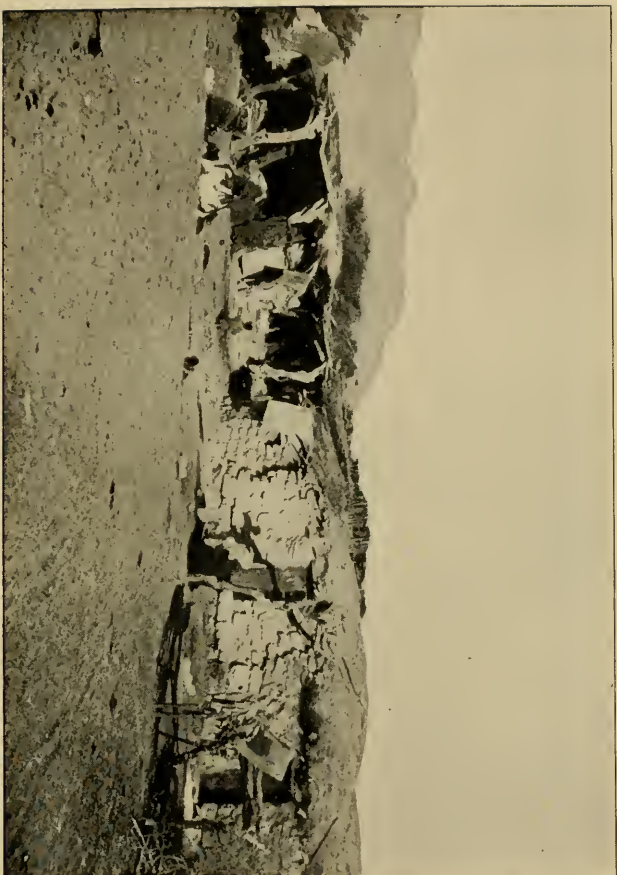
Peræa

Having left the house where Jesus had blessed the little children, a rich young ruler came running to Him, and kneeling before Him, said, "Good Master, What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" There was so much in him that was pleasing that "Jesus beholding him loved him." But the "Good Master" saw that he was not what he ought to be. He loved his riches more than anything else. So He told him to sell his property, to give to the poor, to deny himself for the good of others, and to follow Him. Then would he "have treasure in Heaven." But "he went away sorrowful: for he was very rich." May we not hope that this young man whom Jesus loved, at last so loved and obeyed *Him* that he secured the heavenly treasure.

As He and His disciples continued their journey, He was saddened again by the ambition of two of them, and the mistaken thoughts about

His Kingdom. The brothers James and John, with their mother, asked that they might sit, one on His right hand, and the other on the left, in His Kingdom. When their fellow-disciples heard the strange request, they were "much displeased with James and John." Jesus gave them all another lesson of humility, and taught them how the one who did the most for others was the greatest. He reminded them of how He Himself had come from Heaven, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life" for men. In a few days John stood by three crosses, on one of which was Jesus between those of two thieves. Did he then recall the request by himself and his brother that one of them should be on the right hand, and the other on the left, of their Lord? The disciple was to see His Master a king in sorrow, before he beheld Him the King of glory.

Going before His disciples for a little while, Jesus all alone thought of His approaching agony. Following Him they discovered something so strange in His appearance that they were amazed and afraid. He then took them apart in the way and revealed His lonely thoughts. He told them more fully than before of what was to happen to



Him—that the things of which the prophets had told concerning Him would soon become true; that He would be betrayed, condemned to death, mocked, scourged, crucified. He even told them that he would be spit upon, numbering this indignity with His sufferings. But He at once gave the assurance that on the third day after His death He would live again.

We can hardly understand how “they understood none of these things.” But Peter did not dare to say as he did at a former time, “Be it far from Thee, Lord?” It was already near.

Chapter LIV

Zacchaeus

Jericho

For the last time Jesus crossed the Jordan—the sacred river, probably where its waters divided, that the Ark of God might guide His people into the country that should become the Holy Land, because His earthly home. There its waters parted at the stroke of Elisha's mantle when he disappeared, but to reappear at its source, to talk with Jesus of the decease He was now to accomplish at Jerusalem. There he was baptized, and His Father's voice was heard, and the dove-like form appeared, to attest His Divine nature and mission; and there John the Baptist proclaimed Him the Lamb of God—now on His way to be the Lamb of Sacrifice that should take away the sins of the world.

In company with the festive pilgrims on their way to the Pascal Feast, Jesus and the disciples crossed the rich plain of Jericho six miles to the city of the same name. The fitness of that name,

meaning "the perfume," was found in its groves of palm, its gardens of roses, and sweet-scented balsam, whose perfume the winds carried afar.

According to custom, the people of Jericho gathered in the streets to welcome the pilgrim band. Among them was one who was welcome nowhere within its walls—"a man named Zacchaeus which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich." His riches were unjustly gained in the collection of the city taxes.

Yet "he sought to see Jesus—who He was." Because Zacchaeus was little of stature and could not see Him for the press, he climbed the low branches of an Egyptian fig or sycamore tree. As he looked down, Jesus looked up. As his curious eyes met that of Jesus, his astonished ears heard the call, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." With joyful haste he descended the tree to guide to his home the self-invited but welcome Lord. Neither of them cared for the contemptuous murmurs that the Great Prophet, who claimed to be the Messiah-King, was the guest of a noted sinner.

But such Zacchaeus was to be no longer. In that penitential hour his sins were forgiven.

His name means "the just," "the pure." His

wicked life had belied that name. But when He met Him who is *the* just, *the* pure, the loving One, he confessed his wrongs, and in the presence of his injured and hating neighbors, he declared his purpose to restore to them his ill-gotten gains. This was the test of his changed character. And so Jesus said: "This day is salvation come to this house." He had brought it to one; but it was not for Him alone; it was for all; so He proclaimed to the multitude about him His mission from Heaven, saying: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."



CHRIST HEALING THE BLIND MAN

'Jesus said unto him: "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

—Mark x. 52.

Chapter LV

Bartimæus

Jericho

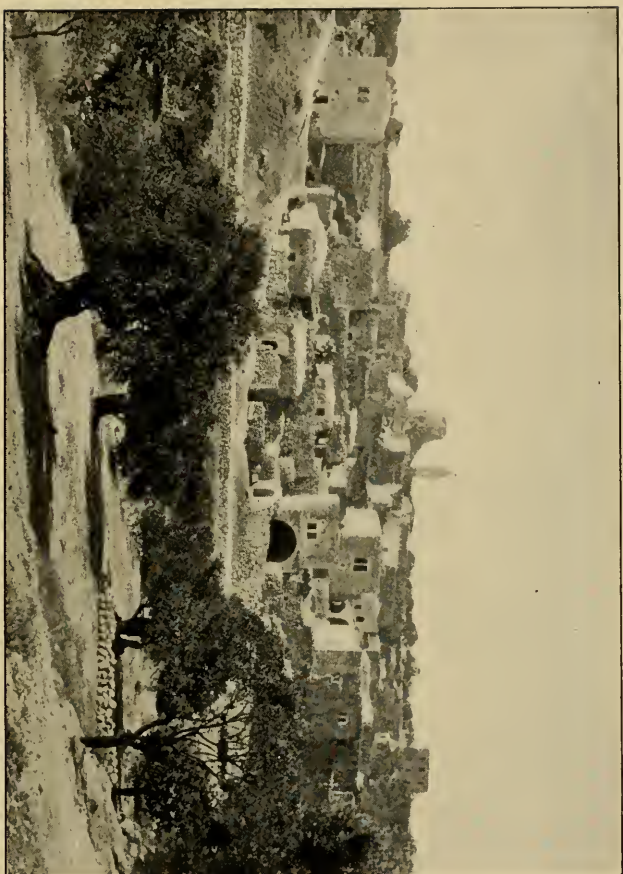
As the crowd accompanying Jesus resumed their journey, the tramp of their feet and the sound of their voices attracted the attention of two blind beggars by the wayside, one of whom was named Bartimæus, the spokesman of the two. "Hearing the noise of the multitude, he asked what it meant." Being told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he hailed Him, saying: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." For this he was rebuked by the multitude, and told to hold his peace. What was *he* to clamor thus before such majesty in this triumphal procession. What "mercy" had he to ask at such a time. Should royalty pause to give alms to a beggar?

But he heeded not the unfeeling rebuke. A precious moment, perhaps a last opportunity, was quickly passing. Still louder, and yet more earnestly, he, speaking for himself and his companion in darkness, cried: "Have mercy on us,

O *Lord*, Son of David." In this address he used yet another name for Jesus, the most reverential that he knew, Rabboni—Lord. The eye of Jesus was ever open to the sorrows of the blind, of whom there were and are many in the Holy Land; and His ear was ever open to their cry. So that of Bartimæus was not in vain; for Jesus heard, had compassion, stood still, called, and commanded him to be brought to Him. This changed the tone of the jeering crowd to that of cheer, as they thought of a possible miracle.

As Mary, mourning for her brother, was made glad by the message, "The Master is come and calleth for thee;" so the blind man was made joyful by the message; "Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth for thee." Despair was changed for hope.

Springing up he cast aside his upper garment, and was led to the waiting Lord. As such he saw Him with inward sight, before his bodily eyes could behold Him. Sightless He stood wondering and hoping until gladdened by the question, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" "The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight." He did not say, "If it be possible;" he had faith—a firm belief in the power and willingness of his Lord to bestow



it. As the great Healer touched the eyes of both, He said, "Go thy way ; thy faith hath made thee whole." The eyes sightless a moment ago looked upon Him. The healed were too full of joy and thankfulness to "go" from Him ; so they followed Him where they had blindly felt their way, glorifying God for what had been done, and joining the people who also, "when they saw it, gave praise unto God."

Chapter LVI

The Feast at Bethany

Bethany

Jesus and His disciples having arrived in Bethany, tarried there while the pilgrims with whom they had traveled went on to Jerusalem. He spent the night and the next day, which was the Jewish Sabbath, doubtless with Martha, Mary and Lazarus, in whose home He had so often found rest and loving care, and whom we are told Jesus loved. During the afternoon many people came from Jerusalem, two miles from Bethany, to see Him ; and also Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. Many, when they saw Lazarus, believed that Jesus was the Christ. So the chief priests planned to put them both to death for fear that more would believe in Him.

The Sabbath ended at sunset. In the evening a supper was given in His honor, by whom we do not certainly know. It was a feast long to be remembered because of what there happened.

The two sisters and their brother were there.



Martha served, assisting in the care of the guests. But Mary cared little for the supper; her thoughts were on her Lord. She rejoiced in another opportunity of being with Him, and looking into His face and listening to His words. As "Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him," she would look tenderly at her brother, returned to her from the grave, and then gratefully at her Lord who had there wept with her, and then said "Lazarus, come forth!"

As she thought upon these things and gazed upon Him, her love, gratitude and adoration was so great that she felt she must show it, as was often done, by pouring sweet smelling oil upon the head. It was a very precious ointment which she brought, very costly and very fragrant, made from Indian spikenard which grew on the mountains of a distant country, and was kept in a flask of white alabaster.

As Jesus reclined at the table she went quietly behind him, broke the flask, poured part of the precious ointment on His head, and the rest on His feet, which she wiped with the long tresses of her hair. So strong was the perfume that it filled all the house.

Her act could not be hidden. All eyes must

have been turned on her in silence, which was at last broken by Judas. Was he calmly praising the tender service for Him whom he called Master? Would he like to join Mary in rendering it? Had he been so long with Jesus and seen so much of His goodness that nothing, however costly, was too precious an offering to the Lord? No, none of these things were true. The teachings and example of Jesus had not kept him from the sin which led him into many temptations: that sin was the love of money. He carried the bag which contained the money for buying things for Jesus and the disciples and for the poor. From that bag he was accustomed to steal.

So when Mary was quietly pouring the precious ointment on Jesus, Judas spoke in a harsh manner, saying, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence"—about fifty dollars—"and given to the poor?" But he did not care for the poor. He wanted the money in the company bag that he might put some of it into his own pocket.

Even some of the disciples spoke as he did, and said, "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor, and they murmured against

her." They were poor fishermen from Galilee, and fifty dollars seemed a great deal to them, and they were sincere in thinking it would help the poor, while the ointment would all be gone in a few moments after it was used.

Poor Mary. Their words seemed unjust and cruel. They thought her gift too much for Jesus : she thought it was too little.

Judas looked at Mary in anger : Jesus in love. We do not know that she said a word, but we can think how she felt and appeared. Jesus spoke for her, reproving His disciples, saying, " Let her alone. She hath wrought a good work upon me. She hath done what she could." He said that wherever His gospel would be preached throughout the whole world the story of her loving deed should be told. And this has come true. After two thousand years, and far away from the Holy Land, in countries of which the company at that feast never knew, this story of Mary of Bethany is told, and will be while the world shall last.

As we read the story of Mary, we are reminded of another woman, whose name we do not know ; she is simply called " a sinner." Each of them attended a feast at which Jesus was present. At the one, Mary was a welcome guest ;

at the other the woman was uninvited and unwelcome. Jesus commended the life of Mary because of its goodness, but admitted that the sins of the woman had been "many."

Each brought an alabaster box of precious ointment to Jesus ; the one to show honor and love : the other penitential love.

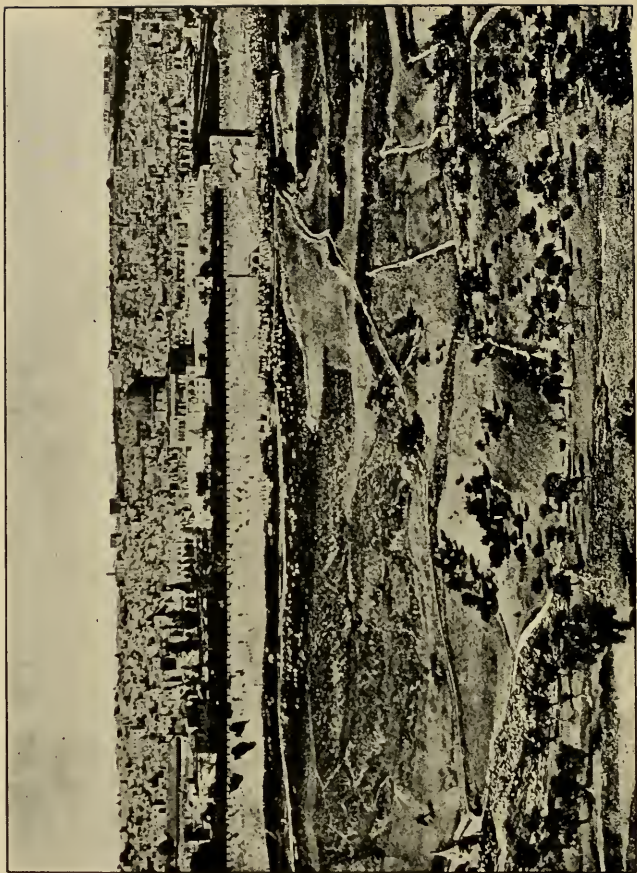
Mary came to Him in joyful and friendly confidence ; the woman trembling, stood behind Him weeping. Mary poured her ointment in profusion on His head and anointed his feet ; the woman in her timidity anointed his feet only.

Mary had then no tears to shed ; but this woman washed his feet with her penitential tears, more precious than the costly ointment, while giving them the kiss of affection.

Mary was unjustly and cruelly condemned by Judas and defended by Jesus ; the woman was hated as "a sinner" by the Pharisee whom Jesus reproved as He said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace."

Jesus was the Saviour, Friend and Lord of them both ; as he is of all who have the loving, adoring spirit of Mary, and the penitent spirit of the sinful but forgiven woman.

Mary was comforted by Jesus. But His



From Photograph

JERUSALEM

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words excited the hatred and maddened the heart of Judas. The ointment on the body of Jesus could not be sold, but perhaps the body itself could be. It is supposed that on that very night he left Bethany and went to Jerusalem, and in the house of Caiaphas bargained with the chief priests to betray his Master unto them for a far less sum than he said Mary's ointment was worth—for thirty pieces of silver, about eighteen dollars, the price of the meanest slave. From that hour Judas sought to accomplish the awful deed which would cost the life of Jesus and his own life, and make him the bitter scorn of mankind.

Chapter LVII

The First Palm Sunday

Jerusalem

“ Ride on, ride on in majesty,
In lowly pomp ride on to die.”

The next day after the feast in Bethany Jesus sent two of His disciples, thought to be Peter and John, to a village not far away, where they would find an ass and a colt tied, which He wished them to bring to Him. They obeyed, not doubting that they would find as He said. When asked by the owners, “ Why loose ye the colt ? ” they answered as Jesus had told them to do, “ The Lord hath need of him. ” And they let him go. “ And they brought the colt to Jesus, ” binding on it some of their outer garments for a saddle. He was its first rider. This ride of two miles is the only one which we know of His taking. All His journeys seem to have been on foot.

Jesus claimed to be a King ; but not like the kings of earth, who when they had come from battle and victory, rode in pride and pomp and

splendor on war-horses. The disciples and some of the Jews thought that He would appear in some such way. But they were mistaken. When He rode upon an ass, He showed that He was meek and humble, while claiming to be King of the spirits of men. Five hundred years before He came into the world, it was said to Jerusalem and the Jews, "Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly and riding upon an ass." These words came true when Jesus rode from Bethany to Jerusalem. In so doing He claimed to be the King whom the Scriptures said would come.

There was a great company of people with Him.

"From every house the neighbors met ;
The streets were filled with joyful sound ;
A solemn gladness even crowned
The purple brow of Olivet."

We can imagine some of them, living in the region.

There is Martha, honoring Him on the road whom she had served in her home ; and Mary following Him when she could not sit at His feet ; and Lazarus, leaving his grave behind him, and with his renewed life serving His Lord.

The man who had not walked for thirty-eight

years till Jesus bid him do so at the Pool of Bethesda, joins with quickened step in the royal procession.

The man born blind looks upward into the face of Jesus, and then into the valley below, recalling the command, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam," where he was healed.

Zacchæus is climbing the Mount of Olives instead of a sycomore tree, not from curiosity, but in adoration.

The two men from Jericho, who in blindness had uttered their repeated cry of anguish, "Have mercy upon us, O Lord, Thou Son of David," now look upon Him in wonder and joy and thankfulness.

And then there are others, not only from this region, but from Galilee, who by their presence in this procession show their gratitude for what Jesus has done for them.

He went before as the crowd started from Bethany. The news of his coming reached the City of Jerusalem. There another crowd gathered. It was composed probably of pilgrims who had come to the Passover Feast, hoping that they would see Him of whom such wonders were told, ready to do Him honor. So "they



took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him." They did not think that what they did would be remembered thousands of years, and that men would sing of the palms they carried, and of the Sunday they did it, and call the day Palm Sunday in remembrance of the way in which they honored their Lord and ours.

For a mile or more from Bethany Jesus went along the country road ascending the mountain. At last He reached "the descent of the Mount of Olives," and the whole multitude began to rejoice and praise God, saying: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest: Peace in Heaven and Glory in the highest." In allowing the people to thus honor and praise Him, He claimed that He was the King of which the prophets had foretold.

Their song was somewhat like that which the angels had sung over the plain of Bethlehem, only six miles distant, thirty-three years before, when Jesus was born.

When the company from Jerusalem heard the song by those from Bethany, they repeated the words, and Jesus heard the grand chorus before Him and behind Him.

At a sudden turn in the road, He beheld the

City. The Kidron valley was between Him and it, but in the clear air it seemed very near. He saw the gorgeous palaces and glittering Temple. He remembered the past, how in His visits there He had been despised and rejected by the people He had come from Heaven to save. He thought of what they would do to Him in a few days, and of the awful things which would happen to them in a few years because of their wickedness.

And so, while the hosannas were all about Him, and the multitudes were rejoicing together, "when He was come near, He beheld the City and wept over it," thinking doubtless of another procession that in those same streets would soon be crying, "Crucify Him," instead of shouting His praise.

Crossing the valley of Kidron He entered Jerusalem with the joyous multitude. But among them were not many who lived in Jerusalem. Its citizens wondered at the numbers and excitement of the throng accompanying Jesus, and asked: "Who is this?" The answer was: "This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." Many of the throng had come from Galilee, and were proud to call Him one of their own countrymen. But the citizens hated Him yet more.

Some of the Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke His disciples, and stop the singing of praises to Him. But He would not.

When the procession reached the Temple which Jesus entered, He did not stay long, for it was evening. With the Twelve He went back over the road along which He had come with the multitude. He came to Bethany and "lodged there." And so He ended the first Palm Sunday.

Chapter LVIII

The Children's Hosannas

Jerusalem

Early Monday morning Jesus returned to the Temple, and repeated what He had done three years before in cleansing the Temple of God. He was much displeased, and drove out the traders and what they sold, reminding them of the words of God written in the Scriptures, "My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves."

But soon there was another and very different scene. At the gates of the Temple daily sat the blind and lame, asking alms of those who entered. They had heard the hosannas to Jesus, and perhaps of what He had done for the blind Bartimæus and for the poor cripple at Bethesda. So the blind felt their way or were led, and the limping ones went as best they could, into the court from which Jesus had driven the traders; and in love and pity He healed them.

"When the chief priests and scribes saw the

wonderful things that He did, they were sore displeased." How strange! We would suppose that they would rejoice because the "wonderful things" gave such happiness to the blind and lame. But there was another thing which displeased them yet more. It was the children crying in the Temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" These happy children may have been choir-boys who sang in the Temple service. Other children may have joined them in repeating the hosannas they had heard the day before. The priests were angry because the young singers honored Him whom they despised. They even blamed Him for letting the children praise Him. With angry tone they asked Him, "Hearest thou what these say?" They knew that He heard them, but they wanted Him to reprove them and stop their song. But again He refused to silence those who honored Him with their praises. As He defended the penitent woman who anointed His feet, and twice defended Mary of Bethany, so now He calmly and kindly defended the children in the Temple, reproving the priests, and reminding them of what David had said about God being pleased and honored by the sayings of the little ones.

Chapter LIX

Farewell to the Temple. The Traitor and the Rulers

Jerusalem

The next day after the children's hosannas in the Temple, Jesus returned to it. But instead of the gladsome children, He met the chief priests, the scribes and the elders, desiring, but not yet daring, to take Him and put Him to death. He saw through all their cunning questions, and mean plots to make Him say or do something which they could use against him. He rebuked their hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and vain show of goodness. Being asked, "Which is the first commandment of all?" He answered by giving them the one which includes all the commandments:

"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY STRENGTH; AND THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF."

He spake his last parables, full of instruction—of the rewards in His kingdom; of the true

spirit of service in it ; of the terrible condition of those who continue in rebellion against God ; of the sin and danger of those who trifle with the blessed invitations of the Gospel He had preached. He then foretold the destruction of the Holy City—now most unworthy of the name because of its wickedness ; and of the Holy Temple, hallowed by His presence, but unhallowed by sin, especially the treatment of Him. In sadness and pity He cried out, “O Jerusalem ! O Jerusalem !” and told of how ready He had been to forgive and bless.

And so He bid farewell to the Temple, whose glory in that hour departed. As He left it He passed the court in which were thirteen chests, into which the multitude were dropping their gifts. Some proudly cast in of their abundance. One poor widow gave two of the smallest coins, together equal to about fourteen cents. He told the disciples that her gift, though so small, was worth more than all the others, because of the spirit and self-sacrifice with which it was given, for it was all she had.

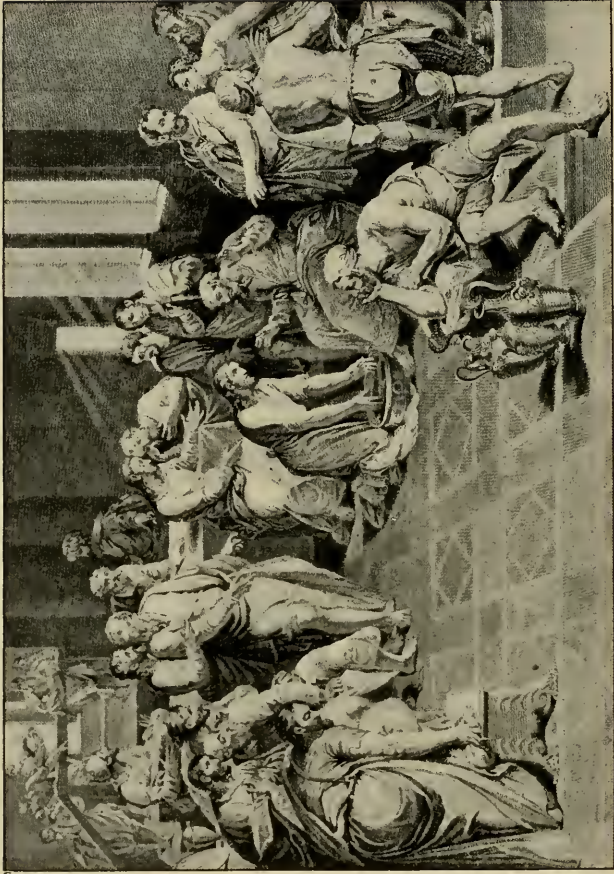
With His disciples He climbed the Mount of Olives, whence they looked down upon the white marble and shining gold of the Temple, while He

assured them that there should "not be left one stone upon another." He told of trials that would come to them; and exhorted them to patience, watchfulness and prayer.

His discourse on Olivet ended, He led them down to Bethany for the last time. What a contrast to the turmoil of the day, was the sweet rest and friendship, on that Tuesday evening of His Passion week, in the village home of them He loved so well.

Probably at the same hour, in the palace of Caiaphas, the enemies of Jesus were assembled, determined to put Him to death, and planning how it could be done, aided by Judas, the partner in their crime.

Wednesday dawned. Probably the priests and Pharisees watched for His coming to the Temple, but His ministry had forever ended. The hour had not come for Him to allow Himself to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. Where or how He spent the day we do not know. If He slept that Wednesday night, it was His last sleep on earth.



Chapter LX

The Upper Room

Jerusalem

It was Thursday evening of Passion week—the last, the suffering days of our Lord—that He and His disciples were together for the last time before His death. They walked from Bethany along the same road over which He had been carried in triumph four days before; which His sacred feet had so often trod, but would never tread again.

They entered a house whose owner, thought by some to be Joseph of Arimathæa, made them welcome. In it was “a large upper room furnished and prepared” for the Passover Feast which Jesus desired to eat with His disciples before His death.

They gathered around the table, with the Master at the head. The seats near Him were the places of honor. This may have been the occasion of a dispute which arose again about who should be the greatest. It must have been

a great grief to their Lord. At the former time when they had a like dispute, He made a little child an object lesson to teach them humility: now He made Himself the object lesson. In the walk from Bethany their sandals had not protected their feet from the dust of the road. These they had left at the door of the house. The washing of the soiled feet was commonly the work of a servant or slave. None such were in that Upper Room. None of the Twelve offered to do this service for the Master. But He did it for them. His act made a deep impression on at least two of them. John thought at once of *who* it was thus humbling Himself—the Son of God, having all power, who came from Heaven to which He would return in glory. Peter at first refused to allow the Master to take the place of a servant to him, but gladly consented when Jesus said: “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.”

The Lord did not conceal His sadness in washing the feet of one of them, whose name He did not mention. “It was Judas who should betray him”—who, as we have seen, probably planned that deed at the Feast in Bethany, a few days before, when the feet of Jesus were bathed, not with water, but with Mary’s ointment; and



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THE LAST SUPPER

Leonardo da Vinci

wiped, not with a towel like that with which Jesus "girded Himself" for humble service, but with the tresses of her hair in adoring love.

"And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me, shall betray me." That "Verily" was a signal word, an alarm bell, whose tone befitted the terrible revelation to follow, which was heard by all except Judas in astonishment and sorrow and self-distrust. The Master had said it: none dare deny, or accuse his fellow-disciple of such a crime. So each asked the question, "Lord, is it I?" Peter beckoned to John, leaning on Jesus' breast, to ask of whom He spake. Jesus answered that it was he to whom He would give a portion of food from the dish before Him. Suiting the action to the word He gave it to Judas, solemnly telling of the most awful woe that would come upon him. The traitor asked—not as the others had done, in sorrow and love and fear of the possibility of such a deed, but in sullen and shameless guilt—Judas asked, "Master, is it I?" His question needed no answer, but Jesus replied, "Thou hast said," meaning that he was the one—the betrayer of the Lord into the hands of men who were plotting His death.

St. John says "he went immediately out"—out from that Upper Room, in that hour the most sacred spot in the world; out from the companionship of the Apostles among whom he was not fit to be numbered; out from all the good influences by which his life had been surrounded; out from the presence of his rejected Lord, his only Saviour; out from all joy and hope into despair and death.

Could there have been a sadder scene as he went from that lighted room into the darkness without? Did it so seem to St. John when, in his old age, he recalled that moment and wrote of Judas, "He went immediately out: and it was night."

Weaving together words of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, and of Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, we have the story of what followed.

"As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and break it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; This is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me.

"And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink

ye all of it: and they all drank of it. And He said unto them, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."

But this solemn service was not for the Apostles alone. It is for all Christians, and is called "The Lord's Supper" and the "Holy Communion."

Chapter LXI

Parting Words

Jerusalem

The last words of a dying friend are precious and long remembered. Before Jesus left the Upper Room He spoke most tenderly to His disciples : it was His sad yet joyful farewell. He was in great trouble Himself, but He said to them, " Let not your heart be troubled." He directed their thoughts from the room in which they were then assembled, and all earthly homes, to the place where He was going, and where they would be with Him after a little time of separation. There they would be together with the Father—His and theirs—whom He had revealed to men as they had never known Him before. He told them that their obedience to the Father would prove their love for Him, and secure for them the special love of the Father and Himself. He promised that the Spirit of God would come into their hearts, as it had never come before ; giving them so much help and joy that He called the Spirit by

a new name—the Comforter. He spoke of sorrow that would come from wicked men to Him, and to them because of their friendship for Him. Yet He could say, “*Peace* I leave with you: *My* peace I give unto you.” He charged them to love one another as He had loved them.

His words made a deep impression on the disciples, who assured Him of their confidence in Him as the Son of God and their Lord; and of their willingness to receive all His teachings. In sadness He told them that soon they who had been together, companions for each other and for Him, would be scattered, leaving Him alone, yet not alone because His Father was with Him. But He would not close His farewell address in sadness. As at the beginning He had said to them “Let not your heart be troubled;” so at the close He bid them, “Be of good cheer.”

Having thus spoken Jesus prayed to the Father. It was the most wonderful prayer ever offered in the world—such as none other than Jesus could offer. Near that Upper Room, twenty-one years before, “in His Father’s House,” He had said to His mother: “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” And now he declared—what no other being on

the earth could truly say—"I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."

Then He prayed for His disciples, who had been taught by Him, and who believed the new and wonderful truths He had come from Heaven to proclaim. He asked that while they remained on the earth, they might be kept from the evil of it; and be a blessing to it, even as He had been a blessing to them.

Then followed a petition in which every Christian may rejoice: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word."

At the beginning of His address in the Upper Room, He told of the mansions He was going to prepare for His friends: at the close of His prayer He made this earnest request: "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." There at last they will all be gathered. His prayer will be answered, for this same Jesus is He who declared at the tomb of Lazarus, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard Me: and I knew that Thou hearest Me always."

"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."

Chapter LXII

Gethsemane

The Mount of Olives

The hymn of joy and praise in the Upper Room was to be followed by words and tones of sadness in Gethsemane. This place, about half a mile from the city walls, had become sacred because "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples."

Leaving eight of them at the entrance of the garden, He led Peter, James and John, still farther. Having witnessed His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, and His power in the death chamber of the daughter of Jairus, they were to witness His agony in Gethsemane. In the Upper Room He had shown the power of His love and sympathy for them; and now theirs was a comfort to Him. He said unto them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me."

But the depth of His sorrow they could not know: One only could; that was His Father.

Leaving the three He was alone with Him. He "kneeled," then "fell on the ground," then "fell on His face and prayed"—once, twice, thrice, in almost the same words. His cry was, "Oh my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me." That cup was the agony of soul and body involved in His death. Yet, if His Father saw it necessary for Him to die in becoming the Saviour of men, He was willing; so He added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

As angels came to Him on the Mount of Temptation, so in Gethsemane, "there appeared an angel unto him from Heaven, strengthening Him"—doubtless sent by His loving Father in this hour of agony, which continued as "He prayed more earnestly," until "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

The three disciples heard only the first utterance of the prayer, for, as on the Mount of Transfiguration, they were heavy with sleep. Three times their Lord came to them and found them sleeping. Gently chiding, then excusing their slumber, He said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

On the Mount of Temptation our Lord was



three times a conqueror : in Gethsemane He was a victor in a three-fold conflict. He rose from those "prayers with nothing but the crimson traces of that bitter struggle upon His brow," calmly ready for whatever trials might come. One such was at hand : He roused His sleeping disciples with the call, "Rise up, let us go ; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

More than two hours had passed since He left the lighted Upper Room, and led His disciples by the light of the full moon to Gethsemane, shaded by its olive trees. Meanwhile a band had been gathering in the city—a great multitude ; servants of the High Priest, to arrest *the* Great High Priest ; the Temple guard, forsaking their holy office to make prisoner the Lord of the Temple ; Roman soldiers with swords to conquer the Prince of Peace ; Jewish rulers to seize their King ; all these leading an ignorant and deceived mob to overcome Him who in that very hour declared that He could command "more than twelve legions of angels."

They came with lanterns and torches, lest the Lord of Glory should attempt to hide in some grotto of Olivet, or among its olive trees where the moon beams could not enter.

Judas was the leader. It is surmised that he first led his band to the house in which was the Upper Room, where we are told "Satan entered into him," for the work he had now begun. But the last Supper was ended, the parting words had been spoken, the last prayer offered, the closing hymn sung. But Judas "knew the place" where the Lord must be. So he led his band through the same gate and along the same path the Master had led the eleven—no longer the twelve—a little while before, to Gethsemane.

Jesus had no sooner roused His sleeping disciples than they heard the tramp of the throng, and saw the gleaming of their torches and lanterns. Judas was probably in advance of his band, who were to recognize Jesus by a signal from him—a traitor's kiss.

"Hail Master," was his salute, followed not only by a kiss, but covering Him with kisses. Did patience ever utter so calm a reply to hypocrisy as Jesus gave, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" We know not what answer the betrayer made by word or act. But Jesus spoke once more, His last words to the erring disciple—not calling him "friend," but saying, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Did not



that question ring in his ears until they were closed in death?

Turning from the traitor, Jesus "went forth" to the band, asking, "Whom seek ye?" They replied "Jesus of Nazareth." Though the name was spoken in contempt, He said, "I am He." In the presence of His calm majesty "they went backward, and fell to the ground."

After His asking for the safety of His disciples, the band arrested Him. Peter, indignant at the treatment of his Lord, in his excitement, cut off the right ear of a servant of the High Priest. But then and there, returning good for evil, the Great Physician "touched his ear and healed him." After Jesus was bound, in righteous indignation He asked "Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take Me?" But there were no relentings. As His terrified disciples forsook Him and fled, His enemies led Him away from the once blessed but forever sad Gethsemane.

Chapter LXIII

Christ Before the Priests and the Sanhedrin

Jerusalem

It was past midnight when Jesus was hurried from Gethsemane to the city, and to the palace of Annas the High Priest, and Caiaphas who then held the office.

Annas first examined his prisoner with bitter hatred, trying to find something wrong in what He had done or said. To his improper questions, Jesus made wise and reproofing answers ; but they so maddened one of the officers that he struck Jesus in the face—that face which “did shine as the sun” on Hermon ; that face which “the angels stare upon with wonder as infants at a bright sunbeam.”

Still bound, Jesus was sent to Caiaphas for further and unjust trial, in which a few of His bitterest enemies took part. They were probably mostly priests, members of the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Council of the Jews. They could find no honest testimony against Him. So they

“sought false witnesses against Jesus to put Him to death.” But these witnesses so contradicted themselves in their lies, that even the unjust judges did not dare to pretend that any of their stories were true. By changing the meaning of words Jesus had spoken about the Temple, they charged Him with blasphemy.

Jesus listened in silence to their charges. This troubled and maddened them. “They felt, before that silence, as if *they* were the culprits, He the judge.” Caiaphas in anger asked, “answereth Thou *nothing*? What is it that these witness against Thee?” With the calm dignity of innocence, still “He held His peace, and answered nothing.” But this only increased the fury of the High Priest as, in a threatening manner and voice, he exclaimed, “I adjure Thee by the living God that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God?”

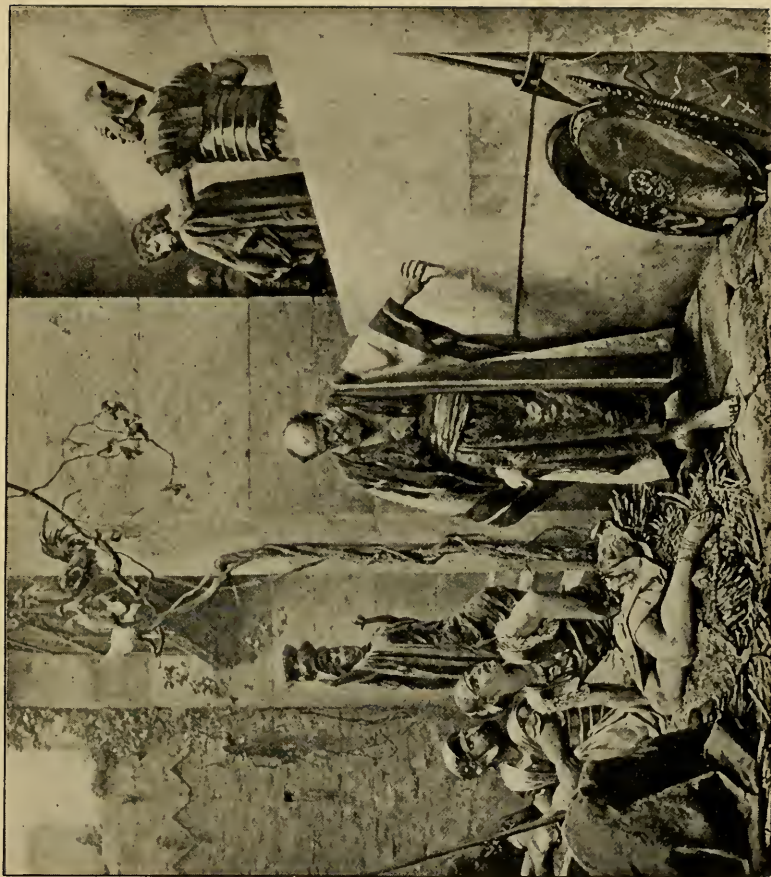
What a question to ask a bound prisoner, already treated as a criminal, whom His judges had already determined to condemn, and that without wanting to know the truth about Him.

He gave His solemn answer, knowing it would but hasten His death, “*I am*”—the Christ, the Son of God. Then He thought of

another scene, in which His accusers and judges would have a part: so He added, "and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of Heaven."

These words, so solemn and true, this false High Priest called blasphemy, and rent his clothes as if in holy horror, while all about him joined in the cry concerning Jesus, "He is guilty of death."

After the disciples forsook their Master in Gethsemane, and fled, Peter recovering his boldness, and John drawn by love, followed Him to the palace of Caiaphas, which John was allowed to enter. Peter for a while lingered near until his companion secured his admission into the court-yard, where he sat near the fire with the servants of the men who were condemning his Lord. He purposed to conceal his relationship to Him, while anxious to see what would be done with his Master. The portress who had admitted him, recognizing him as the friend of John, exclaimed, "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee." But Peter—the once bold but now timid disciple before the inquisitive girl, denied that he ever knew Him. Another maid saw him and repeated what the first had said. His lie was



repeated with an oath. An hour passed. It must have been one of shame and guilt and fear for the disciple who had three times declared that he would be faithful to his Master even unto death.

He was startled by a question by a servant of the High Priest, "Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?" Can it be Peter of whom we read, "Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man?" At that moment the cock crew, reminding him of what Jesus had said, "Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice."

That third denial Jesus probably heard, and in silent grief and love "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter." But that look was enough. The heart of the Apostle, and his concealed but real love for the Master, and the sorrow for his three-fold sin, are revealed in the few words, "Peter went out and wept bitterly"—went out, not as Judas to despair and death, but to a new life of devotion to his Lord.

During the remainder of the night Jesus suffered from insults and brutal treatment. Meekly and silently He bore it all. His persecutors spat in His face; struck Him with their closed fists and with rods; smote Him with the palms of

their hands ; mocked Him ; blindfolded Him and asked who smote Him.

At early dawn the Sanhedrin met for a more formal, but yet unjust and cruel trial—not to prove His innocence, but to try to prove His guilt. Two at least did not approve their doings—the timid but just Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathæa.

The Sanhedrin was not allowed by their Roman rulers to put any man to death ; so they led Jesus “away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the Governor.”

Judas, the betrayer, full of remorse for his deed, went to the Chief Priests and elders and cried, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.” But they only treated him with contempt. He cast down before them the thirty pieces of silver for which he had sold his Lord, and his own soul ; and went and hanged himself.

Chapter LXIV

“Suffered Under Pontius Pilate”

Jerusalem

“Suffered under Pontius Pilate.” Little did He think that this phrase would be repeated through ages wherever the story of Christ would be told. Pilate was not the worst of the Lord’s murderers. He would gladly have released Him, but he was a coward, ready to obey the demands of Christ’s enemies rather than do right.

It was early, probably about seven o’clock, that the royal prisoner was led to the Hall of Judgment, with a cord around His neck to show that He had been condemned. Pilate looked upon Him with pity, and some sense of right; then turning to the angry accusers, asked, “What accusation bring ye against this man?” They called Him a malefactor. Pilate would not condemn Him on so vague a charge. They demanded His crucifixion, for which Pilate alone had authority. Then they made three charges: that he perverted the nation; forbade giving

tribute ; and calling Himself a King, in opposition to the Roman government ; all of which were false.

Pilate noticed only one of them. Before him stood the lonely, friendless man ; wearied and weak after the sleepless night of agony ; His face pale where the bloody sweat had rolled, and stained with tears ; hand-bound ; and rope-corded ; clothed in a peasant's raiment, marked with the rudeness of His captors. This is the One to whom Pilate in pity and wonder asked the question, "Art *Thou* the King of the Jews?" His answer contained the truth He had so long tried to teach even His disciples—"My kingdom is not of this world!"

"What hast Thou done?" asked Pilate. How much might have been included in His answer, telling of His works of wisdom, and power and love, without one act for which He could be condemned. He said, if His kingdom were of this world, His servants would fight, and He would not be delivered to the Jews.

Pilate, astonished, asked, "Art Thou a King, then?" Jesus declared Himself a King, born to "bear witness unto the truth." Pilate impatiently asked, "What is truth?" He did not wait



nor care for an answer—from one whom he thought a deluded man. But of His innocence he had no doubt. And so he gave his first judgment to the Jews: “*I find in Him no fault at all.*”

In justice this should have ended the trial, but it did not; it only increased the anger of Jesus’ enemies. They spoke of His life in Galilee, where Herod Antipas ruled, but who was then on a visit to Jerusalem. Pilate, to get rid of Jesus, sent Him to Herod. This murderer, of whom we have already told, was glad to see Him, but only as a wonder-worker, hoping “to have seen some miracles done by Him.”

“Herod with his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate,” who, calling together the chief priests and rulers repeated his own judgment, and also gave that of Herod, that Jesus had done “nothing worthy of death.” But he still lacked the courage to act according to his judgment and conscience. He vainly hoped to satisfy the public demands by scourging him.

The perplexed Governor then thought of a possible way of escape from his troubles. It was

a custom at the Passover Feast to release some prisoner, whomsoever the people desired. There was a notorious murderer named Barabbas bound in the prison. It seems as if he had been brought out and placed by the side of Jesus in the presence of the multitude, when Pilate asked, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" They said, "Barabbas." Pilate, in disappointment, scorn and anger, asked, "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" They cried out, and repeated the cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." They saw the weakness of Pilate's purpose, and his fear of them, and became bolder in their demands. Right was contending with wrong in him. Yet he would make one more effort, faint though it might be, to save himself from an awful crime, and his prisoner from a death so shameful, cruel and unjust. So he timidly asked, "Why, what evil hath He done? I found *no* cause of death in Him?" and yet, to appease their wrath and silence their demand, he added, "I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." But the only response was the maddened cry, "Away with Him, away with Him, Crucify Him."

Then followed a scene at which men and

angels might together weep—that of a mock coronation. Instead of reverential honor was gross buffoonery; instead of the jeweled diadem, a crown of thorns; instead of a golden sceptre, a common reed. He was stripped of the “gorgeous robe” with which Herod had mocked Him, now dyed yet more with His own blood. In derision they kneeled before Him. Their very spittle bore their insults to His face. Snatching the reed-sceptre from His bound hands they smote Him on the head. And to make the mockery complete, they saluted Him, “Hail, King of the Jews.”

Yet in it all, and through it all, there was a majestic, God-like calmness and grandeur, which neither marred features nor mocking robes could conceal. To Pilate they were plainly visible, as he exclaimed to the heartless crowd, “Behold the man!”

But his appeal found no echo in those inhuman hearts; its only answer was the howling cry, “Crucify, Crucify.” In disgust he yielded, saying, “Take ye Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him.”

They claimed that Jesus ought to die because He made Himself the Son of God. Pilate had

not heard Him called by that name, and was startled, thinking of the permit he had just given. Taking Jesus aside, he asked, "Whence art Thou?" He ought to have thought of that before. Jesus was silent. Pilate spoke of his own power to crucify or release him. Jesus reminded him of his great crime in the use of that power, yet blamed more the Jews who were using him to complete their crime.

In that moment Pilate stood in judgment before Christ, rather than Christ before Pilate.

"From thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him." So he led Jesus into the presence of the frantic multitude. Looking at Him—the calm, majestic, suffering Lord, and then at them, he cried, "*Behold your King.*" But as before, the only answer was, "Crucify." In rage he asked, "Shall I crucify your King?" The taunting crowd replied, "We have no King but Cæsar. If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend."

That name made Pilate tremble. Washing his hands before the multitude, as if that would wash away his guilt, he said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." The



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BEARING THE CROSS

De Crespi

response was the most awful curse man ever invoked on himself—" His blood be on us and on our children."

So Pilate released Barabbas, the murderer, and delivered Jesus the Saviour to be crucified.

Chapter LXV

“ Crucified, Dead and Buried ”

Jerusalem

Nine hours had passed since the arrest in Gethsemane. The mock trial, with all its cruel treatment, was ended ; the unjust judgment had been given. The rulers and the mob were impatient for its immediate execution.

The soldiers stripped Jesus of the scarlet robe with which mockery had decked Him, and He was clad in His own humble garb. His cross, or one of its beams, was laid upon His lacerated shoulders. Two brigands were selected as His companions, to add to His shame. A centurion's band of soldiers, and a multitude of spectators formed a procession bound for Calvary. No wonder our Lord almost fell beneath His load—exhausted by the labors of the previous day, followed by a sleepless night of mental agony and brutal torture.

A man named Simon, who may have shown some pity, was compelled to aid his fainting Lord,

who with tottering footsteps staggered beneath His cross. The only sign recorded of human sympathy was from women, showing their friendship and grief by beating upon their breasts and uttering their lamentations, until checked by Jesus Himself, who for the moment seemed to forget His own sorrows in thought of those to come upon their city. Turning to them He said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children;" or, as in Bishop Heber's words:

"Ye faithful few, by bold affection led,
Who 'round your Saviour's cross your sorrows shed;
Not for His sake your tearful vigils keep;
Weep for yourselves; and for your children weep."

The procession—such a contrast to the one of triumph five days before—reached "a place called Golgotha," also Calvary.

It was a custom of wealthy ladies in Jerusalem, in pity for those to be crucified, no matter how base their crimes, to furnish something by which sensibility would be deadened and suffering diminished. Such was offered to Jesus, but He declined it, willing to suffer all that such a death involved. In Gethsemane He had said,

“The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?”

Well may the hand tremble that holds the pen, or brush, or chisel, with which to portray the agonies of our Lord. Our sensibilities shrink from what imagination pictures. But unless we have some distinct thought of what is included in that word “Crucify,” we shall not appreciate the phrase whose fulness of meaning we cannot comprehend, “*Christ suffered for us.*”

It is enough to hint at the unclothed form laid upon the instrument of torture and death; the outstretched arms upon the cross-beams; the open palms pierced with huge nails driven with mallet; the feet separately or together nailed to the wood; the body given only a slight support—allowed because impossible for it to “rest upon nothing but four great wounds.”

Listen, O Heaven, and Give ear, O Earth, as the ring of the pitiless hammer dies away in the compassionate tones of prayer—

“FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO.”

With faintness we turn our eyes away as the cross with its precious, agonizing burden is lifted and firmly fixed in its place for its victim's living



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THE CRUCIFIXION

Michael Angelo

death. Let imagination supply the details we do not record, of the physician's shuddering catalogue of what was combined in the physical and mental woes—so terrible that the only boon often asked was a speedier death.

Pilate placed upon the cross of Jesus, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin—the three languages of the then civilized world—this inscription :

“THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

This greatly offended the chief priests, who begged him to alter the title, making it read, “*He said I am King of the Jews.*” But in contempt of those who had triumphed over his conscience, and judgment, and efforts to save “the King,” he turned them away with the only and sullen reply, “What I have written, I have written.”

The clothes of Jesus were divided, according to custom, among the soldiers who guarded His cross, thus fulfilling the prophecy, “They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.”

“The people stood beholding,” some of them doing nothing more, but others mocking and deriding the patient sufferer. Three years before, on the Mount of Temptation, Satan had said to

Jesus, "*If* Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." And now the people into whom Satan had entered, as we are told he did into Judas, the partner in their crime, cried out, "*If* Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Even one of the malefactors on his cross echoed the railing of the rabble below, saying, "*If* Thou be the Christ, save Thyself and us."

Even the chief priests, and scribes and elders, forgot their dignity and joined the meanest of the throng in scornful jests. Ignorant soldiers caught the insolent spirit, and holding before Jesus their cups of wine, taunted "the weakness of the King whose throne was a cross, whose crown was thorns."

But there was one loftier in spirit than those shaded by the cross that raised his body above them. Jesus had said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." The first one He drew was a malefactor lifted at His side. The dying thief, at first reviling, then reproving his comrade for what they both had done, drawn by what he saw in the innocent sufferer between them, turned his head and, with his glazing eyes, looked upon Jesus, uttering probably his last

cry of earth, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom." His prayer was answered in the assurance given,

"VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, TO-DAY SHALT THOU BE WITH ME IN PARADISE."

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." His eye rested on her who, thirty-three years before had brought him as an infant to the Temple, where the aged Simeon had foretold of the sorrow that had now come. He was not unmindful of her future need of filial care. The beloved disciple, already at her side, should take His place. So from His cross, to her He said,

"WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON!"

and to him,

"BEHOLD THY MOTHER!"

It was noon, but seemingly, as in Byron's awful dream of *Darkness*, "The bright sun was extinguished." For three hours Jerusalem stood aghast in silent awe. Whispered words must have been spoken by the multitude. Silence reigned with the King on the cross, until broken

by His agonizing cry whose fulness of meaning we cannot know,

“MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?”

When the cross had borne the fevered body for six hours, there came from the parched lips the only cry of suffering,

“I THIRST!”

Some one, friend, or enemy relenting in pity, put a sponge, dipped in the soldiers' drink, to the dying lips. But this little act of mercy provoked the inhuman protest of by-standers.

The end was near. The Son of God, God's beloved Son, the Son Whom the Father sent into the world, and Who was now leaving the world to go to the Father—the Son no longer “forsaken” as He cried a little while before, now uttered the words of loving trust,

“FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT.”

Then came the voice of victory—in the very moment of seeming dire defeat—

“IT IS FINISHED!”

Finished His holy life on earth ; *finished* the “Father's business” revealed in the Temple



near His cross ; *finished* His works of mercy ; *finished* the revelations of truth ; *finished* the work of man's redemption.

With that farewell to earth, He bowed His head and yielded up His life. The Lamb of God had become the Lamb of Sacrifice for the sins of the world.

“ The vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the *top* to the bottom,” and an earthquake rent the rocks asunder and unsealed the silent tombs.

Gazing on the picture which Bishop Heber has drawn in his immortal poem on “ Palestine,” we cry with him,

“ Thou palsied earth, with noonday night o'erspread ;
Thou sick'ning sun, so dark, so deep, so red ;
Ye hov'ring ghosts that throng the starless air ;
Why shakes the earth, why fades the light ? Declare :
Are those *His* limbs with ruthless scourges torn ;
His brows, all bleeding with the twisted thorn ?
His the pale form, the meek, forgiving eye,
Raised from the cross in patient agony ?
Be dark, thou sun ; thou noonday night, arise ;
And hide, O hide the dreadful sacrifice ! ”

The Roman centurion, charged with the execution of the death warrant for the alleged blasphemer and rebel, was so impressed by the

Divine-human mien of his victim, and the supernatural tokens of sympathy with Him, that he exclaimed, "Certainly this was a righteous man;" yea more, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" There were others, unconquered by love, but at last conquered by fear, who tremblingly echoed the centurion's words.

To hasten death, the legs of the two malefactors with Jesus were broken by the soldiers, who, finding Him apparently dead, brake not His legs: but, lest He might only have swooned, one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, from which blood and water flowed. The bodies of the two malefactors were taken down from their crosses and hurriedly huddled into their shameful graves—but one of them would rise in glory. The body of Jesus remained a little longer, while Joseph of Arimathæa, the rich, noble, but timid member of the Sanhedrin, showed his new courage and sympathy for Jesus by going to Pilate and begging His body. His act encouraged the equally timid Nicodemus, who came with myrrh and aloes to embalm the body and wrap it in the fine linen which Joseph had bought.

Near Calvary, in the garden of Joseph, was a new rock-hewn tomb where they reverently laid

the body and rolled a great stone against its door.

The women who had followed their living Lord through the land where Jesus lived, even to His cross, now followed His dead body to the tomb.

The next day was the Jewish Sabbath which they sadly spent in their homes, awaiting the earliest hours in which they might give one more proof of their love by returning with spices and ointments for His burial.

Chapter LXVI

“ He is Risen ”

Jerusalem

The third day after Jesus was crucified He arose from the dead, on the 9th of April; forty days before His ascension into Heaven on the 18th of May.

On the first Easter morning, the five or more women of whom we think as last at the cross, were first at the tomb. They came from different parts of Jerusalem, or possibly from some place without the walls, whose gates would still be closed “while it was yet dark.” In love they brought spices and ointments unto him to whom the Magi, in adoration, had brought frankincense and myrrh thirty-three years before; and on whom Mary had poured “very precious ointment” for His burial.

The women were unmindful of the sealed stone at the door of the tomb, and ignorant of the Roman guard placed there to prevent the disciples from taking the body of Jesus away, and



Page 311 ANGEL AND WOMEN AT THE TOMB *Bouguereau*

then claiming that He had risen from the dead.

As Jesus said at the tomb of Lazarus, "Roll ye away the stone," we may think of His Father as saying to an angel in Heaven, "Go to yonder world and roll ye away the stone from the tomb of my beloved Son."

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake : for the angel of the Lord descended," rolled it away, and sat upon it, while for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men

So was already answered the question the women asked of each other, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"

Mary Magdalene seems to have gone a little ahead of her companions. Her joy at the opened tomb was turned to sadness in the discovery that it was empty, for "the Lord she loved was gone."

To whom should she run to report her discovery? First of all to the sorrowing "Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved." Meanwhile the other women approached the tomb. Seeing nothing to hinder, they entered ; but were immediately startled by the angel who kindly said, "Fear not ye, for I know that ye

seek Jesus who was crucified. Come see the place where the Lord lay."

Then came a strange question, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" and a sad revelation, "He is not here;" and a blessed assurance, "He is risen." These last words are read and repeated over and over every Easter Sunday. They are so familiar to us that they do not seem so wonderful as they did uttered by the angel to the sad, then joyful women.

He reminded them of what Jesus had said in Galilee about His being delivered into the hands of sinful men and crucified; and rising again on the third day. They then remembered His words. He told them to go quickly and tell His disciples that Jesus was risen from the dead. He sent a special message to Peter. With a mingled feeling of fear and joy the women returned to the City.

Mary having delivered her hurried message to Peter and John, they determined to know the truth of her story, and so ran to the sepulchre; John outrunning Peter, and looking into the tomb, but too timid to enter. Peter on arriving went in and John followed him. Truly the body was gone. There lay the grave clothes, not as if

they had been left in hurried confusion, nor as if the body had been rudely snatched away, but laid in the perfect order in which we may believe Jesus did everything when living on the earth.

The napkin which had been about His head “was wrapped together in a place by itself.” If we may believe that the Lord Jesus, having come to life, tarried in His tomb long enough to show such carefulness, what an example is He to us in what we call little things.

When John saw not the body, but did see the clothes, he believed that Jesus had risen ; while Peter marveled yet more as they returned to their homes.

Chapter LXVII

Mary at the Tomb The Roman Guard. Jesus and Peter

Jerusalem

One visit of Mary Magdalene to the tomb was not enough. Intensely excited, having started the two Apostles for the sepulchre, she followed them to it, but lingered alone after they returned. With one great loving thought, disappointed, her spices unused, her grief measured by her affection, anxious to know where was the body of her Lord, and fearing it was in the hands of His enemies who had already treated it with the most shameful cruelty, she stood outside the tomb weeping. As Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, she wept at His. Stooping she looked in. Did she have some faint hope that after all, through her dim eyes, she would see Him there? She saw what she looked not for—two angels calmly seated, one at the head, and the other at the feet where the body had lain. They were in white—a great contrast to the darkness and gloom about them.



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"TOUCH ME NOT"

C. Schönherr

As she was stooping, looking, weeping, they spoke to her. We are not told that she was afraid and they calmed her fears. To their question, "Woman, why weepest thou?" they needed no answer. They might have said to her, as the angel had said to the other women, "We know that ye seek Jesus." Her answer is full of sorrow in these words, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." The tomb was too lonely and sad even with the bright angels who were moved by her tears. So she turned her head away. Her first look was enough to dry her tears, or to turn them into tears of joy, if she had known whom she then saw. The same question from within was asked from without, "Woman, why weepest thou?" These were the first words from the lips that had been closed, but were now opened. The voice was almost an echo from the tomb. It continued, "Whom seekest thou?" This is the gardener, thought she, and possibly he has taken Jesus away. She pleaded with him to tell her where she might find Him. The answer was one word—a word with which she had been familiar, and which she had loved to hear. It was her own name. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary." Her

astonished and joyful cry was one word—"Rabboni," which has been preserved for us that we may hear and utter the very sound of her exclamation, which means Master.

She fell down before Him to grasp His feet and worship Him. But while He was still her loving friend and Lord, as He had been before His death, in some things He was changed; and so He gently told her, "Touch me not." He made her His first messenger of the glorious news of a risen Saviour to His disciples. On her first return from the sepulchre, her sad cry was, "They have taken away my Lord;" on her second it was changed to the joyful assurance, "I have seen the Lord."

But Mary was not the only one made glad in that hour by meeting with the risen Jesus. The "other women," who had departed quickly from the sepulchre, and did run to bring His disciples word, "heard a voice saying, All hail." Like Mary, astonished and joyful, they fell at His feet and worshipped Him. With it all there were some fears; so that He bid them, "Be not afraid; go tell My brethren that they go to Galilee, and there shall they see Me."

Thus far only women saw the Easter angels,

or the risen Lord. Peter and John had seen neither, though they had visited His tomb. All they knew was what the women had told them, and what they had seen in the sepulchre—the empty niche and the folded garments.

We may think of the other disciples, and of other men and women friends of Jesus, going alone or in little groups from the morning to the evening of that first Easter day, to the sacred spot of which the early visitors had told such strange stories. Then they would meet again and again, and talk it all over and over, wondering more and more what it all meant, and whether yet other wonders would happen.

But these were not the only excited people in Jerusalem on that day. The guard of the tomb, the Roman soldiers, who saw the angel roll back the stone from the door of the sepulchre, fled to the city, and told the Chief Priests what they had seen. These men who had caused the death of Jesus, denied that He had risen from the dead; and that of Himself He had left the tomb. So they started a story that while the guards were asleep, Jesus' disciples entered the tomb and stole away His body. They bribed the soldiers to say that their story was true. We would suppose

that men who "became as dead" in the presence of the angel, would fear to repeat the lie. But this they did for money, as Judas had betrayed the same Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

Sometime, somewhere on that Easter day, the Lord appeared unto Peter. We do not know what passed between them. The last time they had seen each other was when Peter denied Him, saw His reproving look, went out and wept bitterly. He had doubtless received the comforting message which the angel had sent to him by the women at the sepulchre, that they should tell Peter especially that the Lord was risen, and that he would meet Him again in Galilee. But Jesus did not wait to meet him there. Within a few hours at the most, after leaving His tomb He appeared to His penitent and loving disciple, and no doubt, assured him of His forgiveness.



Chapter LXVIII

Emmaus. "It is I Myself"

Jerusalem

Two disciples of Jesus, one of them named Cleopas, knowing of the appearances of the angels but not of the Lord Himself, walked slowly towards their home in Emmaus. Suddenly He joined them, but they knew Him not. As they conversed together they were surprised at His apparent ignorance of the great events that had happened in Jerusalem. They told of their disappointed hopes. Then He astonished them by His knowledge of the Scriptures concerning Himself.

Reaching their home they invited Him to stay with them. He consented. "And it came to pass as He sat at meat with them, He took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. And He vanished out of their sight."

"And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by

the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"

Their joy was too great to be kept in their home in Emmaus. Supposing themselves to be the only ones who had seen the Lord, "they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem." What a contrast there was between this joyful walk to the city, and the sad one from it a few hours before. They thought not of weariness. Joy quickened their steps. It was yet early in the evening.

Ten disciples were together at their evening meal. Peter had told them of his meeting with the Lord. So as the disciples from Emmaus entered the room, they heard the news, "The Lord hath appeared unto Simon." And then they told *their* wonderful story how He had appeared unto *them*.

"And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

At the Last Supper when He was in great sorrow, knowing that He would be crucified the next day, He said to the disciples, "Peace I leave with you." It was that kind of peace which one who loves Christ may have, no matter what trou-

ble others may make. And now death was past, and He had risen. His first greeting was the same as His farewell blessing.

But His coming was so unexpected and so sudden, and His appearance so different from what it was before His death, that they "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." But He soon proved to them that He was the same Jesus, though changed in appearance. Then He taught them from the Scriptures, as He had the disciples in Emmaus. He told them to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins. He gave them a great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you." He promised that the Holy Spirit would be with them at all times and everywhere they went to make people His friends. And so the first Easter meeting ended. All the disciples rejoiced in what they had seen and heard of the risen Saviour; except Thomas, who was absent, and thought the wonderful stories they told him were too good to be true.

On the second Sabbath the disciples, including Thomas, were assembled full of thought and

feeling concerning their risen Lord. The doors were shut. Without their being opened, suddenly Jesus stood in their midst, repeating yet again those comforting words, "Peace be unto you." He turned to Thomas, spoke to him, and showed His hands and side which had been wounded when He was crucified. Thomas was no longer the doubting disciple. With the rest he believed that Jesus had risen, and exclaimed with joy and love, "My Lord and my God."

The company of the Apostles was now broken up. They were without a leader. They had no longer a common purse from which their daily wants could be supplied. Those who lived in Galilee returned to their homes.

Chapter LXIX

On the Sea-shore

Galilee

One day there were together Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John and two other disciples. Living near each other, and having been companions with Jesus for three years, it is not strange that they "were together" talking about the past, and wondering about the future. The appointed day had not yet arrived for them to meet their Lord near the sea-shore where they were gathered; from which they had once gone, leaving their fishing boats and nets to follow Jesus. While waiting to meet Him again, what should they do? There was the calm lake before them. There was "a little ship" as if waiting for them to enter it. There was the large strong net, ready to enclose a multitude of fishes. Night, the best time for taking fish, was near.

Peter always active, the first to speak or do, exclaimed, "I go a fishing." Again we see his influence. "They say unto him, We also go

with thee." So, as John had followed Him into the tomb, he and the other five followed Peter immediately into the boat. All night they were casting and dragging their net. The long weary hours passed until the break of day, but they caught nothing. They little thought that He who once stood on the opposite shore watching their toiling and rowing in a stormy night, and at last coming to their relief, was now watching their fishing-toil and would come to their help.

As the morning dawned, they discovered some one on the shore one hundred yards away. Because of the distance, or of the dimness of the morning light, they would not know any one, but might suppose, a stranger, wishing to buy fish for his morning meal. Perhaps they so understood him when he asked them, "Have ye any meat?" In their disappointment, they could only answer him, "No."

To their surprise he told them to cast the net on the right side and they would find. They may have supposed that, with the morning light, he saw some ripple in the water, or other sign that fish were there. They quickly obeyed. But now they were not able to draw the net because of the multitude and size of the fishes. Then they

remembered the miracle which Jesus had once wrought at almost the same spot. John was the first to give expression to the thought that it was Jesus. As he, when in the tomb with Peter, was the first to believe that the Lord was risen ; so he was now the first to discover Him on the sea-shore. So " that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord." As Peter was the first of the two to enter the tomb in sorrow, so he now in gladness cast himself into the sea, and was the first to greet his Lord.

The others followed as well as they could with the " little ship " and dragging net. They saw a fire of coals, which was no uncommon sight then, nor is it now.

Jesus invited them to join Him in the morning meal, bringing some of the fish they had caught. Peter, in the joy of meeting his Lord, had forgotten the fish, and left his companions to drag the net without the help of his strong arms. But now he sprang up and, going to the boat, seized the net and drew it to land, though when counted it was found to contain one hundred and fifty-three great fishes.

Jesus renewed His invitation, " Come and dine."

How different this scene around this "fire of coals" from that other when Peter, surrounded by enemies of Jesus, denied Him, as he stood with them and warmed himself. His Master was soon to remind him of that former hour. Jesus' appearance was such that "none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord." As at other times, He "taketh bread and giveth them." His Last Supper was in the Upper Chamber in Jerusalem: His last meal was on the sea-shore of Galilee. The one reminds us of His coming death: the other of His living again.



Chapter LXX

“ Feed My Lambs ”

Galilee

In Christ's appearances to His disciples on the first and second Sabbaths after His resurrection, He proved to them that He was their living Lord. When He met the seven on the sea-shore, and in His appearances after that, He taught them what they were to do for Him, though His body would not be with them any more. Before His death they had been mistaken about His Kingdom. After that event they understood what He had said before it—“ My kingdom is not of this world.”

When that morning meal by the sea-shore was ended, He gave the seven a lesson which all of them could understand, about His Kingdom in the hearts of men ; and what spirit they must have in bringing men into it.

The lesson was especially given to Peter. He had been boastful about his friendship for Jesus, as being greater than that of the other disciples ;

he said he was ready to do anything for Him, even to die. Then he had three times denied that he was a friend of Jesus. True, he had repented of his sin, and been forgiven; but Jesus gave him opportunity for showing his love, and that in a way which Peter little suspected. It was not in doing something which Peter would call great. It was not in dying for Him. It was something which would show a very different spirit from what he once had toward *children*.

“So, when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.”

Peter must have been astonished at these words. They were unlike any command the Master had given before. It was to do an humble work for children. Peter loved Him, and so was ready to obey this command; which was not only for him and those with him on the seashore; not only for all the Apostles, but for all teachers and parents and preachers. It has been repeated tens of thousands of times, in all parts of the world where Christ is known. It is often the first words of the Bible that children learn to speak or read.

It was given by Christ, not to children, but about them.

Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my *lambs*"—the little ones, the young children. Whatever I have said about the sheep—My older friends and followers—about My love for them and their love for Me, about My Father's love for them, and how at last they shall be in My fold in Heaven—all these things are true about the children who love and obey Me.

"Feed *my lambs*," said Jesus to Peter. As I said to the young child whom I raised from death—Talitha cumi—My little lamb, so I call every child My little lamb. I know its name. I love it. I died for it. It is Mine.

"*Feed my lambs*," said Jesus to Peter. Remember how once and again you tried to turn the children away from me, thinking they troubled me. You were mistaken. I then told you to "Forbid them not to come unto me." I now say, Forbid them not to come unto you. And not only let them come, but *feed* them. Teach them the things about me which they can understand. Watch over them. Help them to be and to do good. Train them to love me. Then shall I know that you love me indeed.

Three times Peter was asked by Jesus, "Lovest thou me?" as many times as he had denied Him. Jesus was satisfied. Peter having showed his willingness to do the humblest work, the feeding of the lambs, was prepared to obey another command of His Master, "Feed my sheep."



Chapter LXXI

On a Mountain in Galilee

Galilee

Let us remember how Jesus before His death said to His disciples, "After I am risen again I will go before you into Galilee;" and then how an angel said to the first visitors at the tomb, "Go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you;" and then remember how, when they started with their message, Jesus met them and said, "Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me."

No wonder He would like to meet His friends, the Apostles and others, in Galilee. There lived many who had known and loved Him. There He had done His most wonderful works. There many could be gathered to whom He could talk about His Kingdom in the hearts of men, and tell how to make men His followers.

The disciples who lived in Galilee, and probably certain women, one of them the mother of

Jesus, had come from Jerusalem to meet Him. They spread the news that Jesus had risen, and had appointed a day to meet His friends on a mountain—we do not know what, but one near the sea; perhaps where He had preached His “Sermon on the Mount.”

The day arrived. From different directions came five hundred people to see and hear Him again. We may think who some of them might have been. As, in the crowd that followed Him on Olivet, when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, there were doubtless many whom He had healed in that region, so were there many such who would gather about Him from their Galilean homes.

Let us imagine the wonderful scene. The daughter of Jairus, whom Jesus called the “pet lamb,” is eager to grasp the pierced but now living hand that once held hers in death, as He commanded, “I say unto thee arise.” The nobleman leads his robust boy to Him who once allayed his fears, saying, “Thy son liveth.” A bounding lad hastens to greet the Host of five thousand guests fed with his few loaves and fishes. The child once called into the midst of the Apostles, now crowds his own way into the midst of a larger company,

to the same Master. The woman, no longer known as "a sinner," looks dimly through joyful instead of penitential tears. The centurion's servant, once "ready to die," is now one of the "five hundred brethren," ready to live for their Lord. The aged mother from Peter's home is full of fervor for Him who rebuked her fever. The young son of the widow of Nain grasps the hand of Him who touched his bier. The palsied man, once let down in faith from the opened roof, climbs the mountain alone, still faithful to his Healer. The man once blind gazes, as does none other, in memory of the touch upon his sightless eyes. All these join in the chorus led by him who had been dumb—

"He hath done all things well."

In that mountain group, beside these and others on whom miracles had been performed by Jesus, were many who had been miraculously fed by Him, and listened to His teachings. We are told that "Jesus came and spake unto them." Yes, it was His voice—the same they had heard on yonder sea shore, from the anchored boats, or in the neighboring Synagogue of Capernaum; the voice which His murderers thought they had forever silenced on Calvary.

Jesus came to those five hundred, we know not from where, or with what appearance. "When they saw Him, they worshipped Him." He spake unto them saying, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

That command has been called "Christ's Last Command," and "the Great Commission," telling His friends always and everywhere how to honor Him, and how through Him men may be saved.

Chapter LXXII

The Ascension

The Mount of Olives

After the meeting of the five hundred on the mountain in Galilee, the Apostles returned to Jerusalem, probably told to do so by their Master. They did not understand for what purpose. Some of them seem to have thought that possibly He would now become a King in Jerusalem. "But Jesus Himself knew what He would do." It was what He told Mary Magdalene at the tomb—"I ascend unto my Father."

It was the 18th of May when Jesus and His friends assembled in the Holy City for their last meeting. Forty days had passed since His resurrection. Where He had been during the most of that time we do not know. Some think He ascended to His Father in Heaven, returning meanwhile ten times to the earth, showing Himself to His disciples. Some think He remained on the earth all of those forty days.

But now His natural life, and His resurrection

life, on earth, were ended. In the farewell meeting He told His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit should come into their hearts to fit them for teaching and preaching about Him, and to help men to believe them and become His followers. They were to be witnesses that what the Bible—the Old Testament Scriptures—said about Him was true. The gospel—the good news about Him as Jesus the Saviour—was to be preached, not only in the Holy Land, to the Jews, but also “in the uttermost parts of the earth” to all people.

The meeting ended. It was on Thursday, the same day of the week on which Jesus had met His disciples the last time before His death, when “they went out into the Mount of Olives.” And now again “He led them out” to the same mountain.

We may think of them as passing through the streets of Jerusalem, then through the gate that led to the valley of Jehoshaphat; then crossing the brook Kidron, and ascending the mountain.

Olivet was a fitting place for Jesus to take His last look of the world which He was about to leave.

Not far distant, just beyond the intervening

hills the angels, thirty-three years before, had descended over the Shepherd-plain with their song of glory to God because He was born. In the distance rolled the Jordan whose waters had been made sacred by His baptism, and where John the Baptist had claimed Him to be the "Lamb of God," who since then had been offered on Calvary. Below Him was Bethany, so full of loving memories. To some spot near where He stood He had often come with His disciples for rest and instruction, or alone for communion with His Father. It was the Gethsemane of His agony and bloody sweat, of Judas and his cruel band.

Winding around the mountain was the road He had so often traveled, over which He rode in triumph, so soon changed into humiliation and sorrow.

He looked down upon Jerusalem, the Holy City, hallowed by His presence; the Jerusalem over which He had wept, and where He had wrought miracles of power and love.

He looked upon the white and golden Temple, the Holy House, made especially so because of what He had been and done therein. Thither He had been brought as the infant Saviour over whom Simeon and Anna rejoiced. There He had gone

as a boy, to learn about His Father's business, which He had continued until He could say to Him, "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." There He had spoken as never man spake, and there children had sung His praise.

Beyond the city was Calvary with all its awful memories; and the tomb in which He had lain, now empty because of His glorious resurrection. We know not what were His parting words to His disciples. No doubt they were as tender and loving as those He spake in the Upper Chamber at the Last Supper. Those filled them with sorrow; these with joy.

At last "He lifted up His hands"—those blessed hands which had touched the deaf, the blind, the sick, the dead, and they were healed—the most blessed hands ever laid on the head of childhood. "He lifted up His hands and blessed *them*"—His disciples, His family on earth, His chosen ones, to tell the world of Him. "And it came to pass while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

The disciples who from Olivet had watched His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, now from the same mount "looked steadfastly towards Heaven



as He went up " in grander triumph to the New Jerusalem.

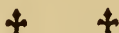
At that former time, in the earthly Temple, He had listened with delight to the Hosannas of children : in the Heavenly Temple He was to be greeted with yet grander song of saints and angels.

The first time His name was ever spoken on earth was by the angel Gabriel, who said to Mary, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus"—Saviour. That was before He was born. When His earthly life was ended, while the disciples stood gazing at His lessening form until hidden in a cloud of glory, two angels suddenly appeared, speaking of Him by the same name, Jesus. Perhaps they were the same who asked the women at the tomb, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" Now they asked the disciples, "Why stand ye gazing up into Heaven?" At the tomb, they had said, "He is risen." And now they declared :

"This same Jesus which is *taken up* from you into Heaven, shall so *come* in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven."

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever
shall be: world without end. Amen.



*“ And many other signs truly did Jesus in
the presence of His disciples, which are not writ-
ten in this book; but these are written, that ye
might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of
God; and that believing ye might have life
through His name.”*

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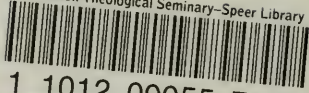
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